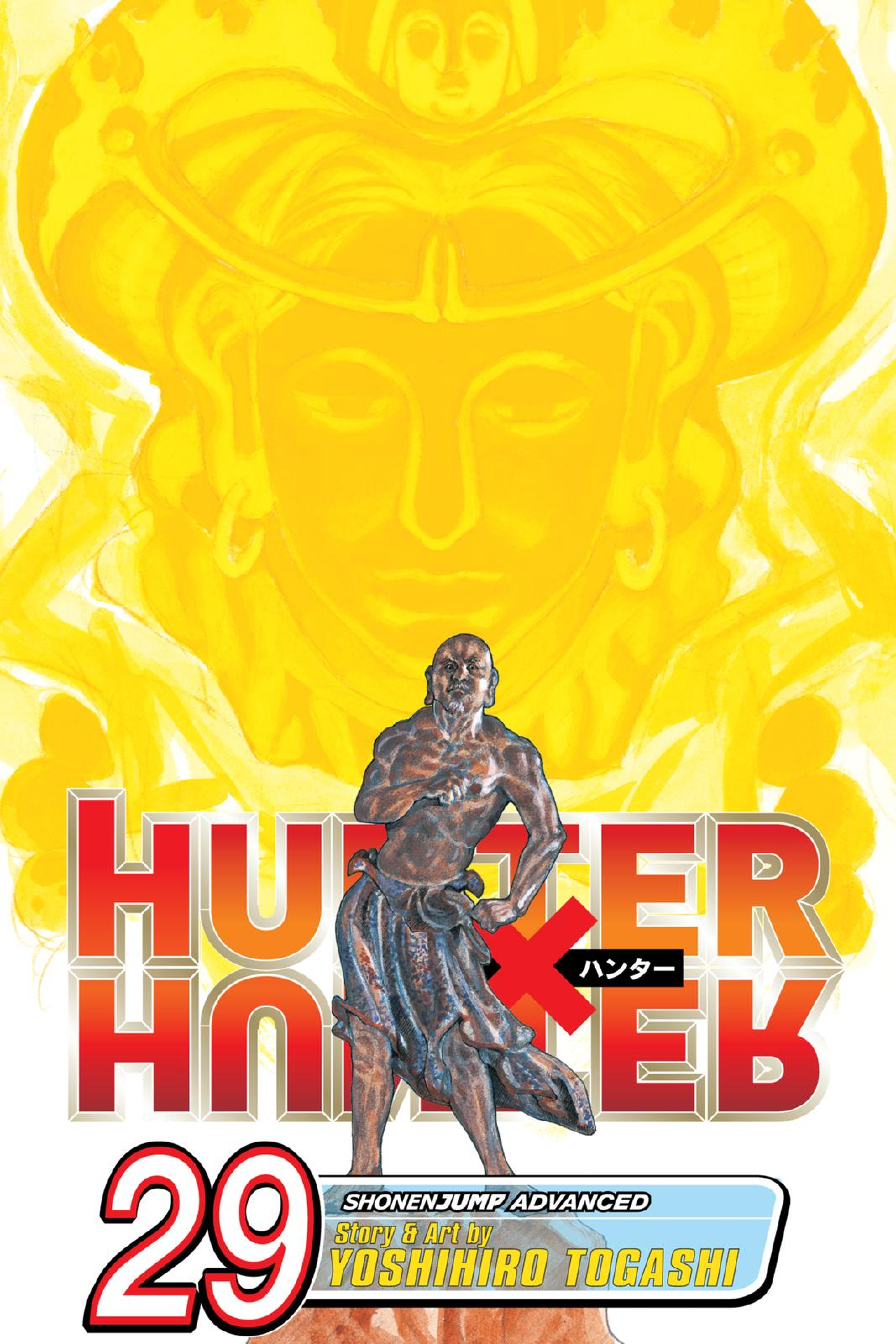

HUNTER × HUNTER

ハンター

29

SHONENJUMP ADVANCED

Story & Art by

YOSHIHIRO TOGASHI

冨樫義博

It didn't seem right to bother him.

Yoshihiro Togashi

Yoshihiro Togashi's manga career began in 1986 at the age of 20, when he won the coveted Osamu Tezuka Award for new manga artists. He debuted in the Japanese **Weekly Shonen Jump** magazine in 1989 with the romantic comedy **Tende Shôwaru Cupid**. From 1990 to 1994 he wrote and drew the hit manga **YuYu Hakusho**, which was followed by the dark comedy science-fiction series **Level E**, and finally this adventure series, **Hunter x Hunter**, available from VIZ Media's SHONEN JUMP Advanced imprint. In 1999 he married the manga artist Naoko Takeuchi.

HUNTER X HUNTER Volume 29
SHONEN JUMP ADVANCED Manga Edition

STORY AND ART BY
YOSHIHIRO TOGASHI

English Adaptation & Translation/Lillian Olsen
Touch-up Art & Lettering/Mark McMurray
Design/Matt Hinrichs
Editor/Shaenon K. Garrity

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RATED T+ FOR OLDER TEEN

PARENTAL ADVISORY
HUNTER X HUNTER is rated T+ for Older Teen and is recommended for ages 16 and up. Contains realistic violence and mature language.

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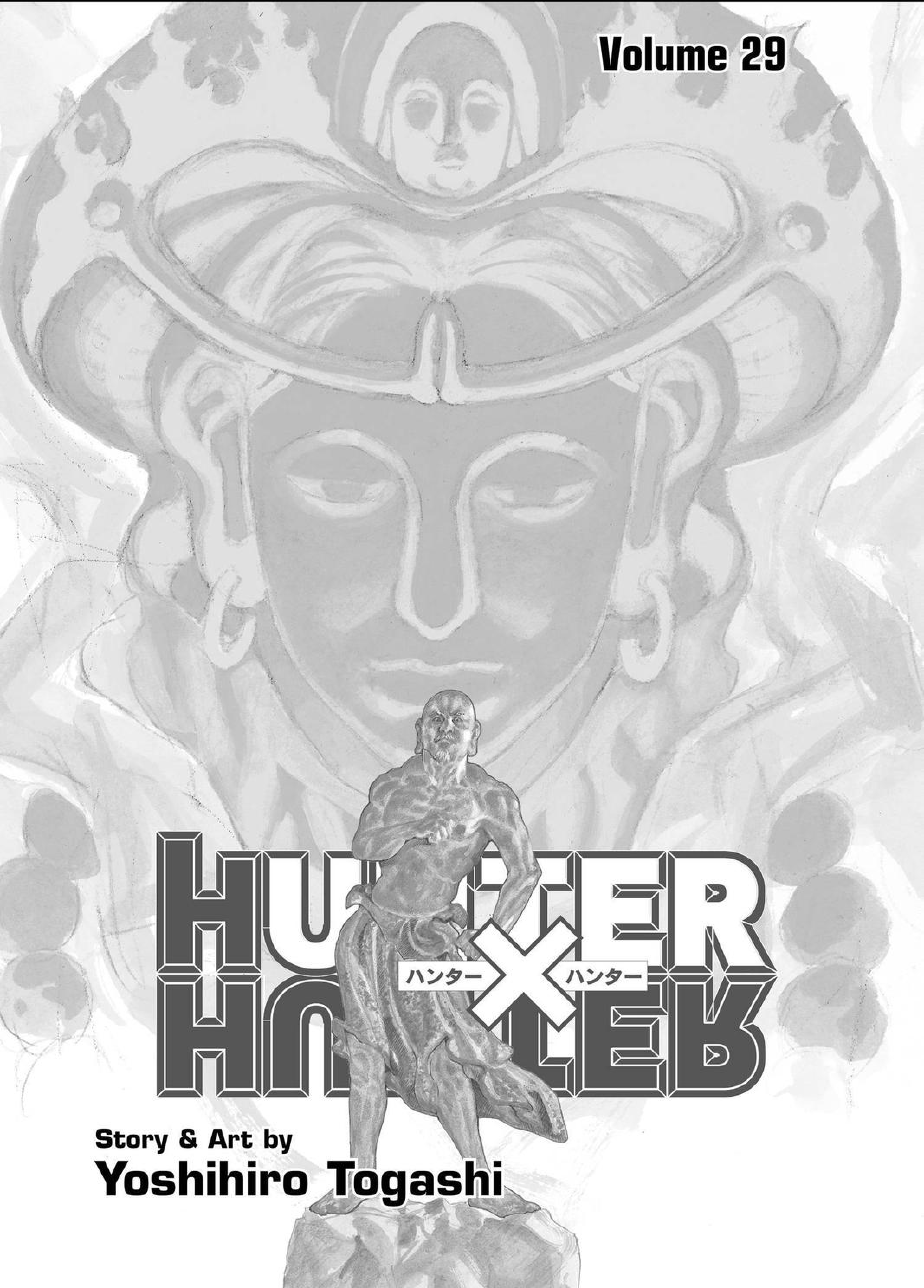
SHONEN JUMP ADVANCED MANGA



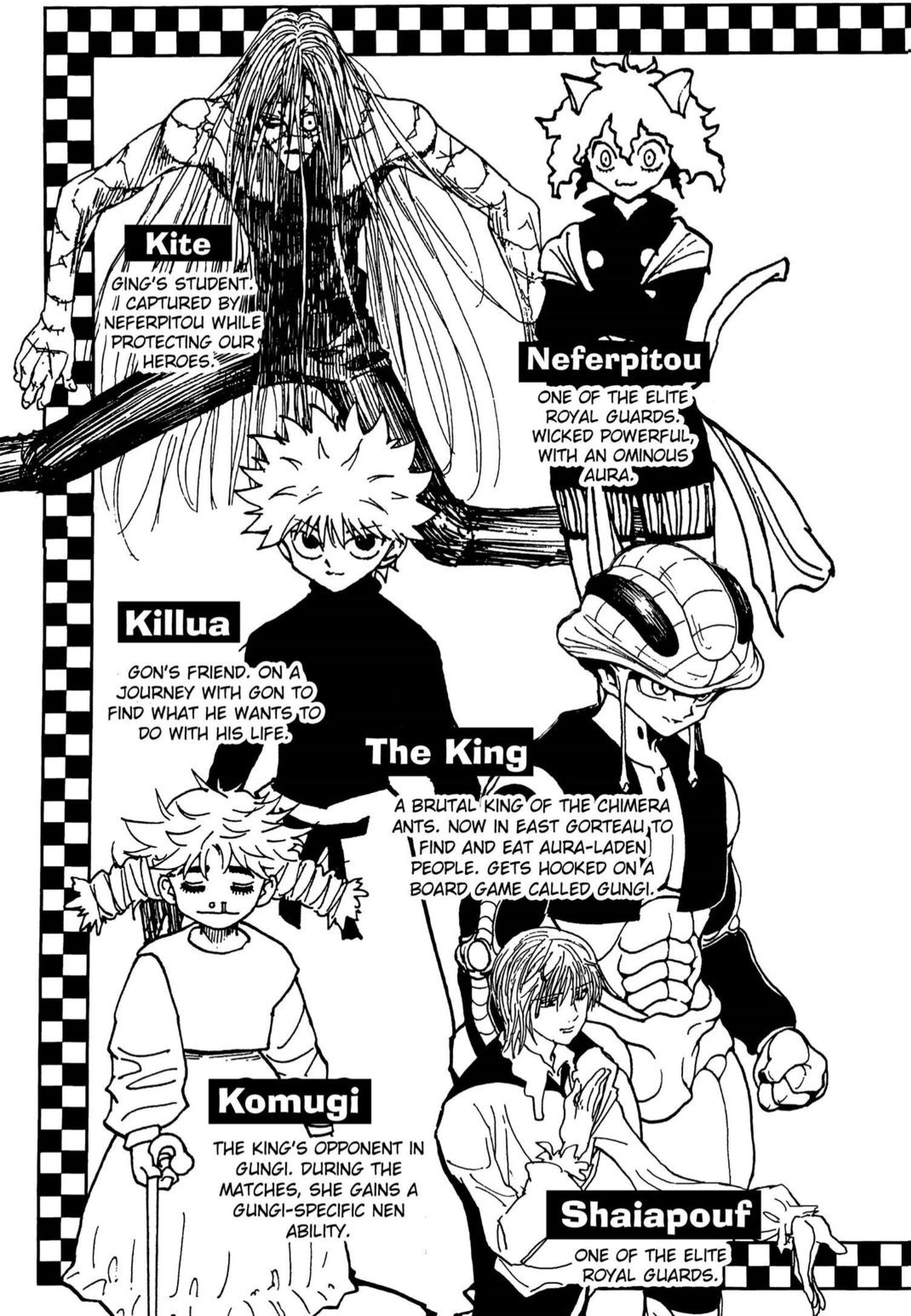
Volume 29

HUNTER×HUNTER

ハンター×ハンター

Story & Art by

Yoshihiro Togashi



Kite

GING'S STUDENT. CAPTURED BY NEFERPITOU WHILE PROTECTING OUR HEROES.

Neferpitou

ONE OF THE ELITE ROYAL GUARDS. WICKED POWERFUL, WITH AN OMINOUS AURA.

Killua

GON'S FRIEND. ON A JOURNEY WITH GON TO FIND WHAT HE WANTS TO DO WITH HIS LIFE.

The King

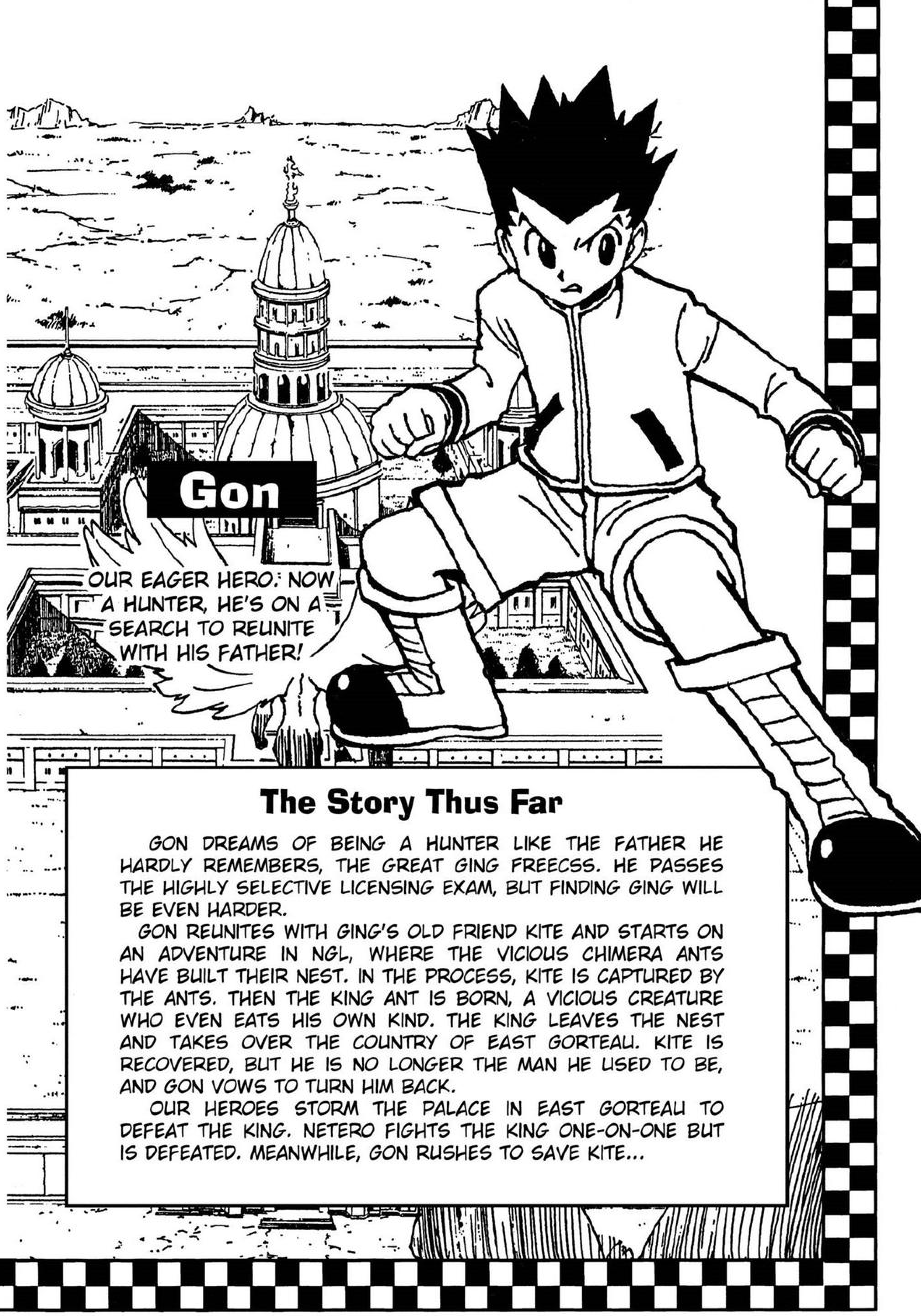
A BRUTAL KING OF THE CHIMERA ANTS. NOW IN EAST GORTEAU TO FIND AND EAT AURA-LADEN PEOPLE. GETS HOOKED ON A BOARD GAME CALLED GUNGI.

Komugi

THE KING'S OPPONENT IN GUNGI. DURING THE MATCHES, SHE GAINS A GUNGI-SPECIFIC NEN ABILITY.

Shaiapouf

ONE OF THE ELITE ROYAL GUARDS.



Gon

OUR EAGER HERO. NOW A HUNTER, HE'S ON A SEARCH TO REUNITE WITH HIS FATHER!

The Story Thus Far

GON DREAMS OF BEING A HUNTER LIKE THE FATHER HE HARDLY REMEMBERS, THE GREAT GING FREECSS. HE PASSES THE HIGHLY SELECTIVE LICENSING EXAM, BUT FINDING GING WILL BE EVEN HARDER.

GON REUNITES WITH GING'S OLD FRIEND KITE AND STARTS ON AN ADVENTURE IN NGL, WHERE THE VICIOUS CHIMERA ANTS HAVE BUILT THEIR NEST. IN THE PROCESS, KITE IS CAPTURED BY THE ANTS. THEN THE KING ANT IS BORN, A VICIOUS CREATURE WHO EVEN EATS HIS OWN KIND. THE KING LEAVES THE NEST AND TAKES OVER THE COUNTRY OF EAST GORTEAU. KITE IS RECOVERED, BUT HE IS NO LONGER THE MAN HE USED TO BE, AND GON VOWS TO TURN HIM BACK.

OUR HEROES STORM THE PALACE IN EAST GORTEAU TO DEFEAT THE KING. NETERO FIGHTS THE KING ONE-ON-ONE BUT IS DEFEATED. MEANWHILE, GON RUSHES TO SAVE KITE...

HUNTER×HUNTER

ハンター ハンター

Volume 29

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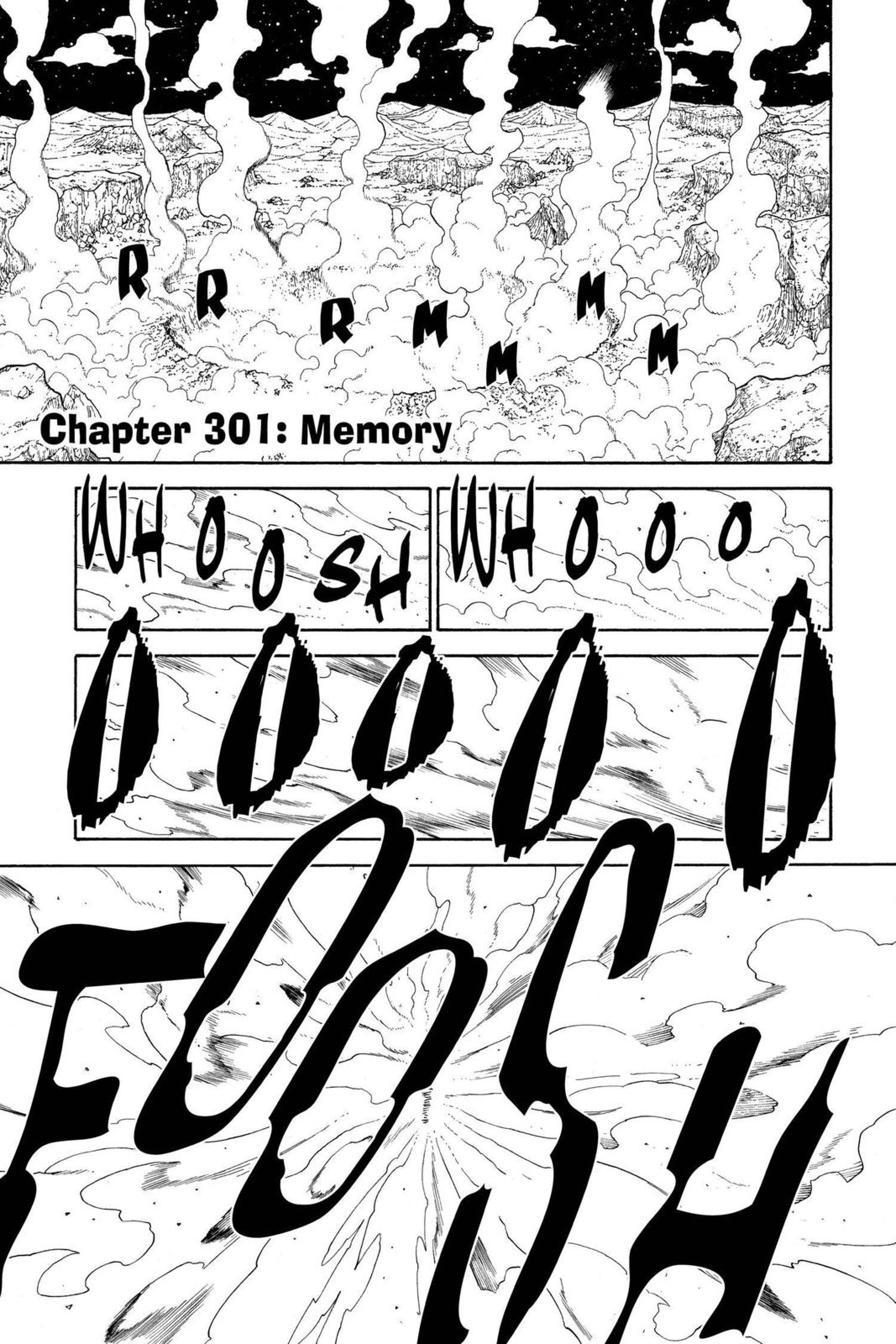
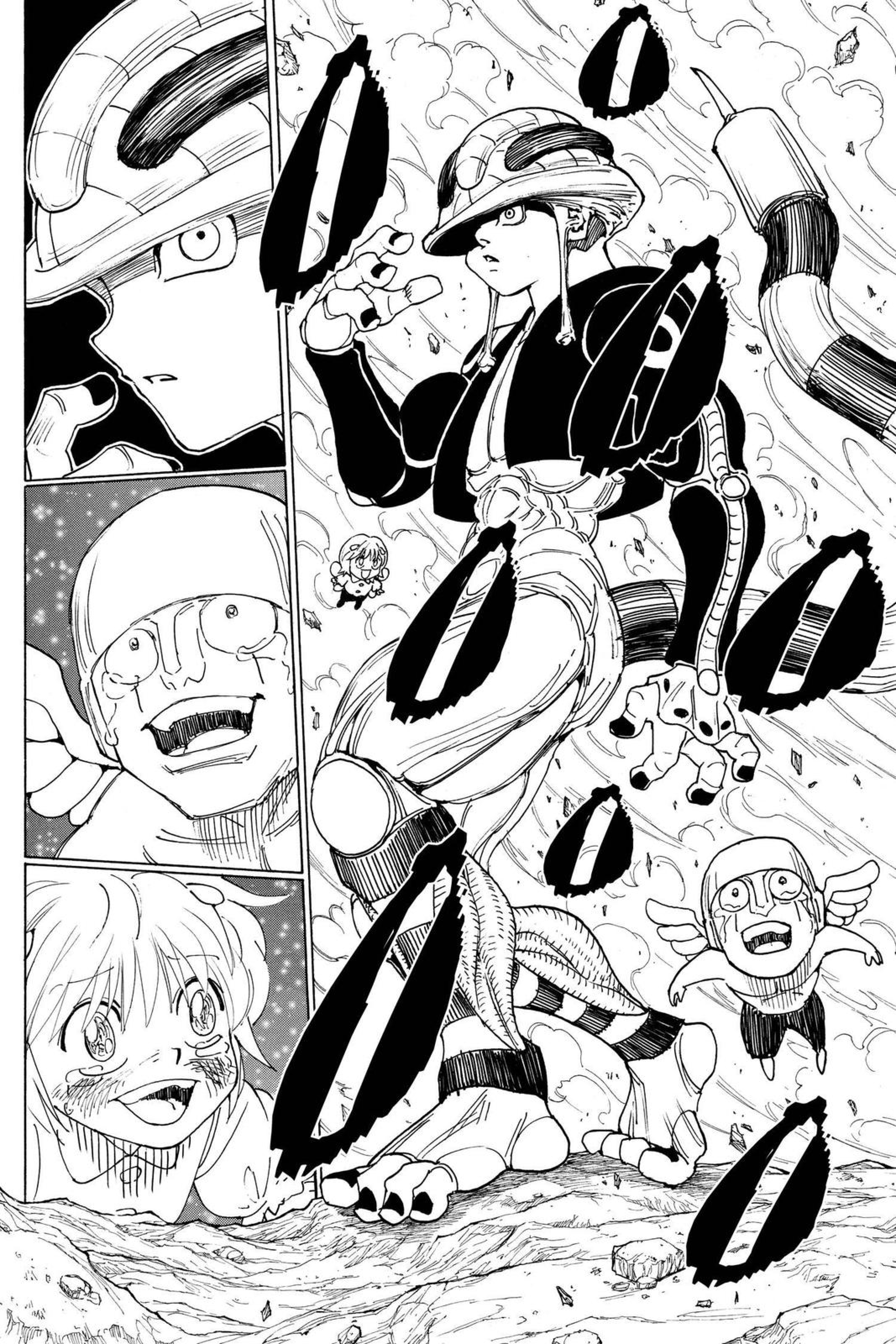
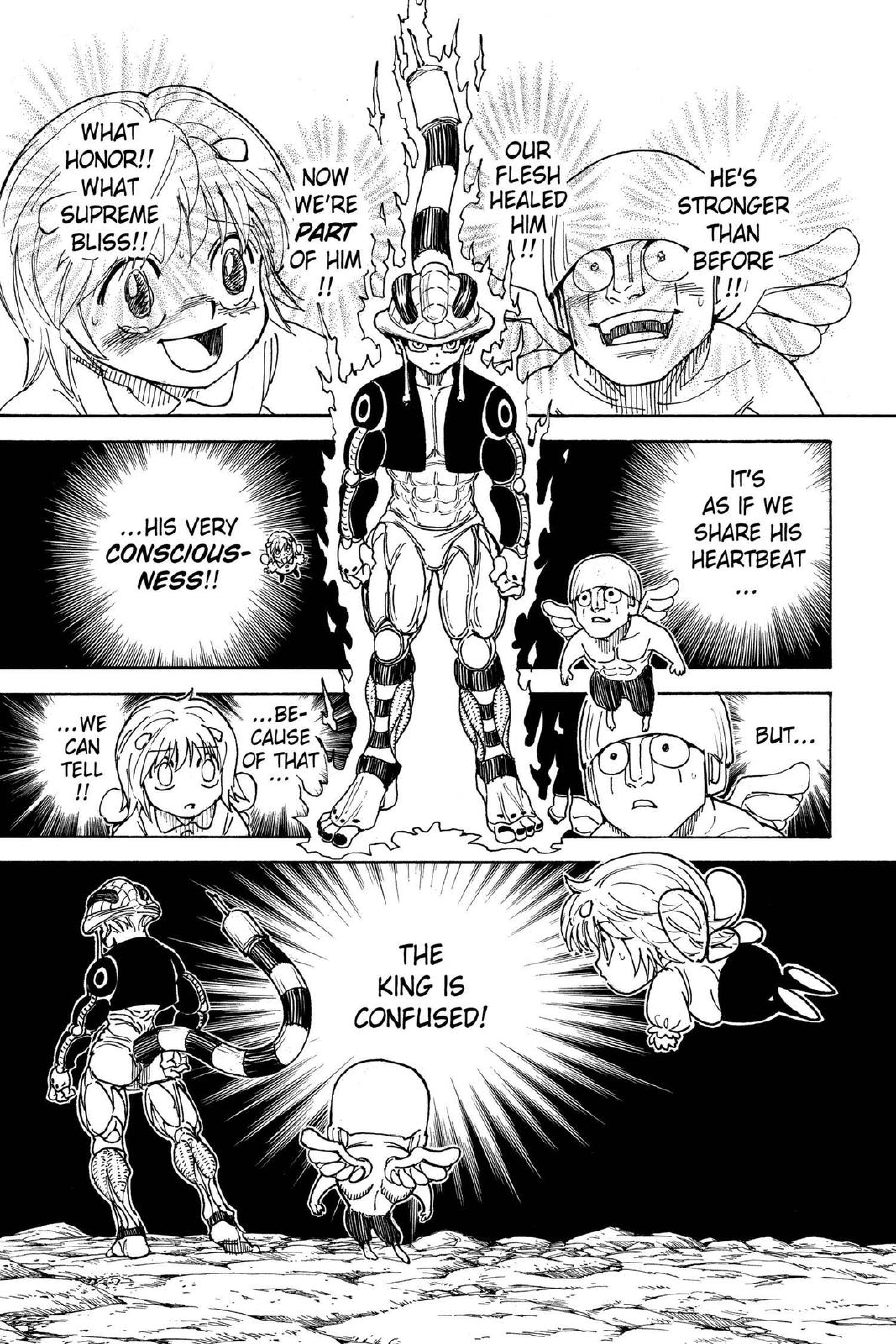
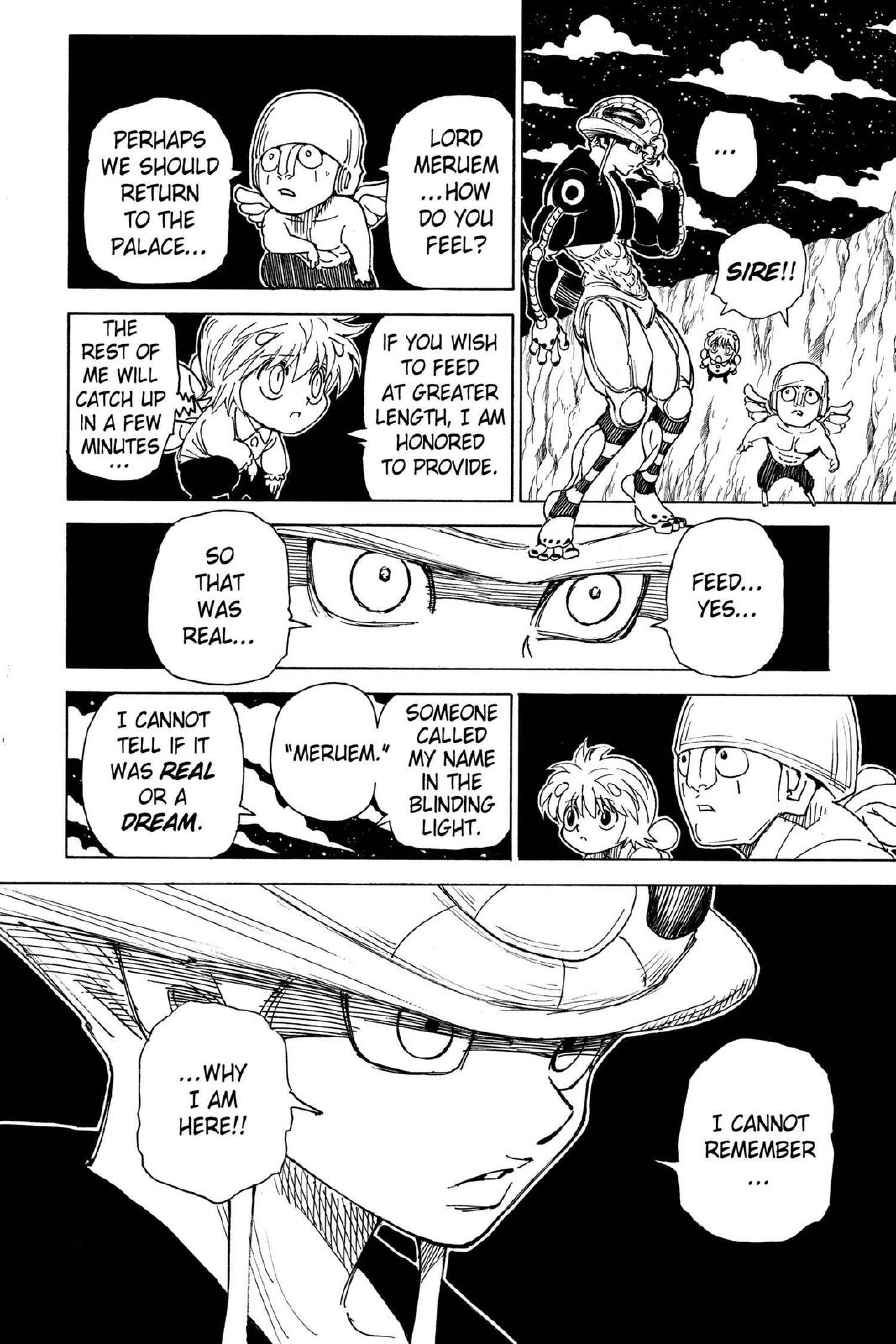
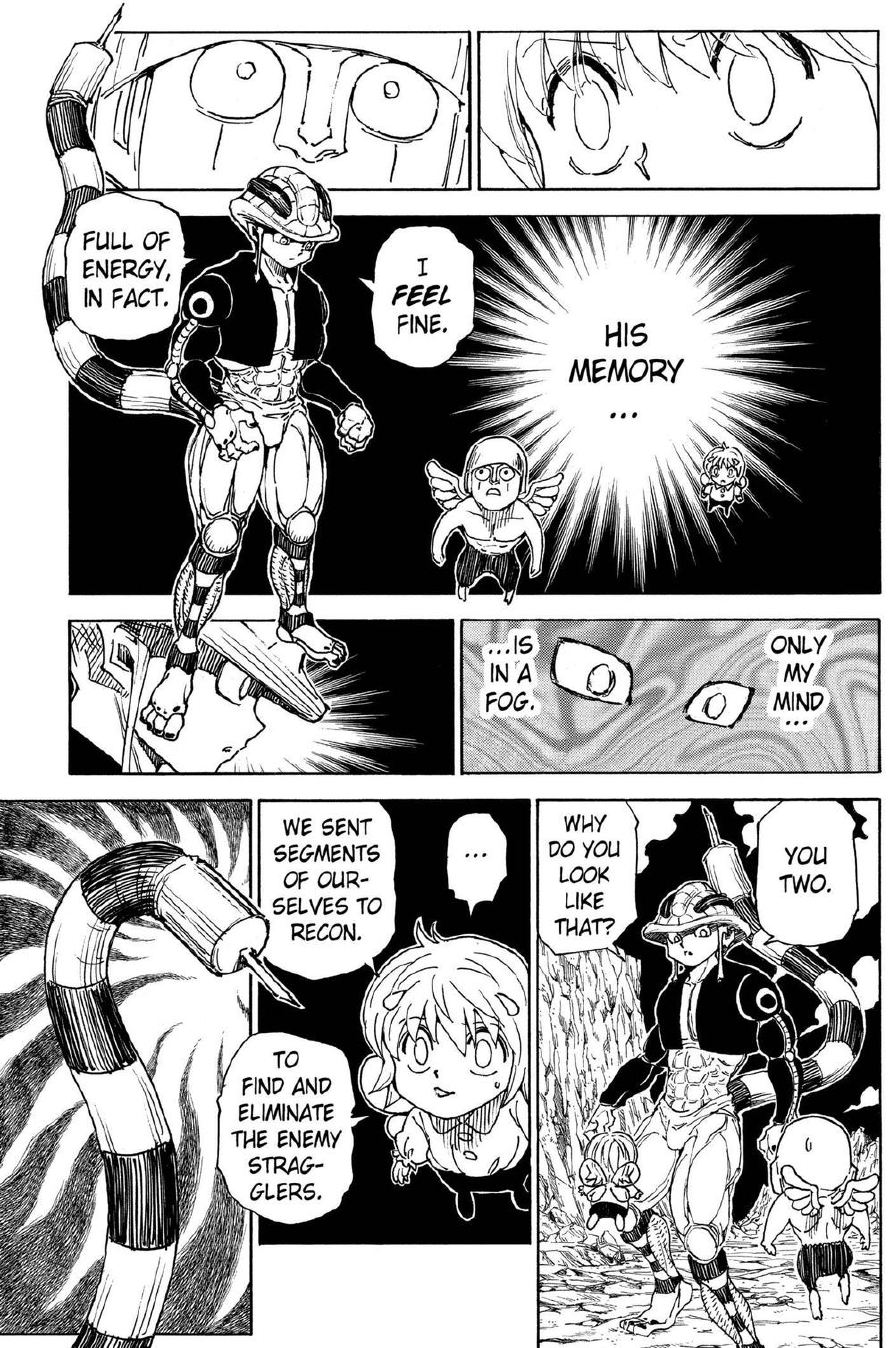
Chapter 301: Memory

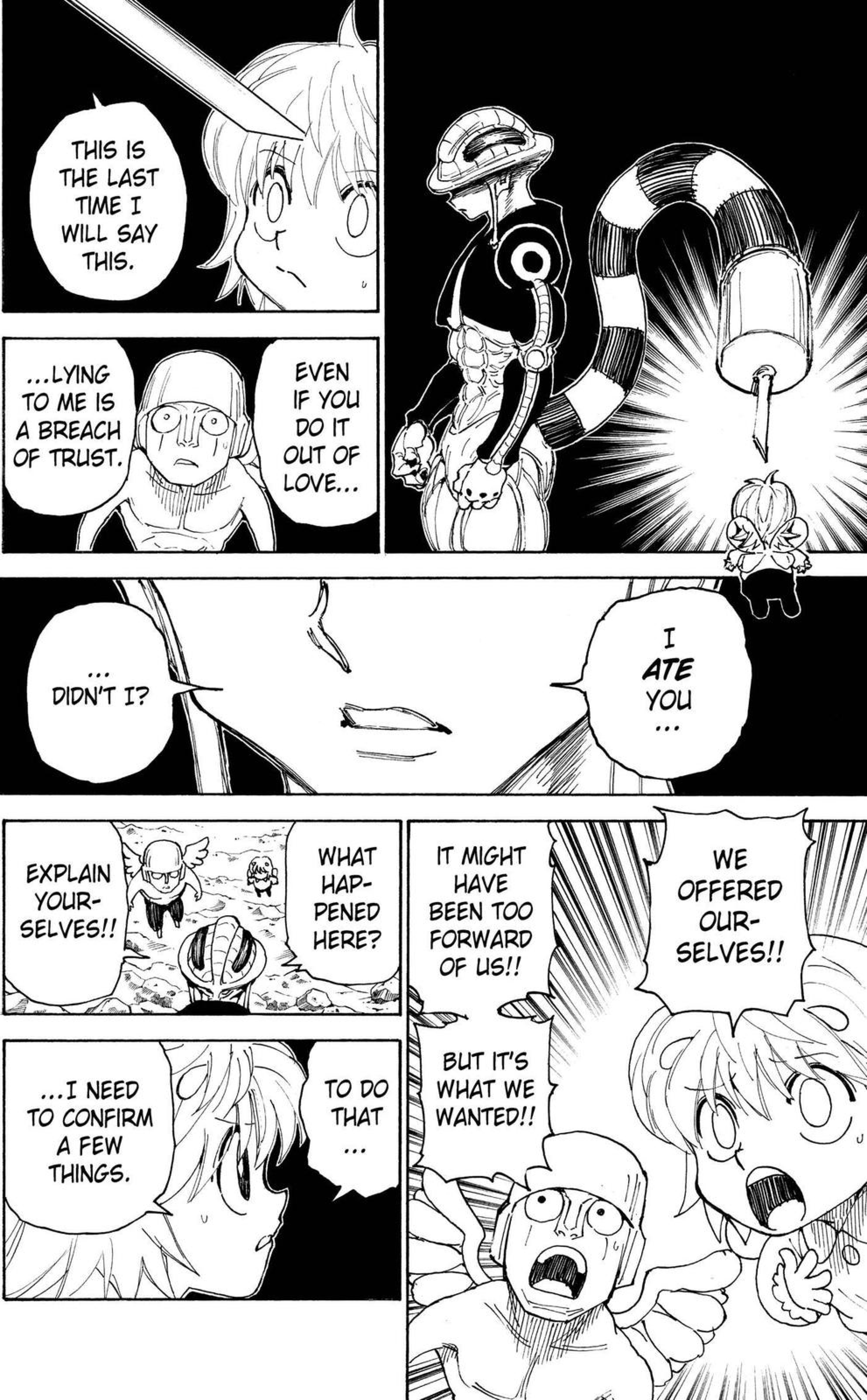

RRRMMMMM
WHOOSH
WHOOO
OOOOOO
FOOSH

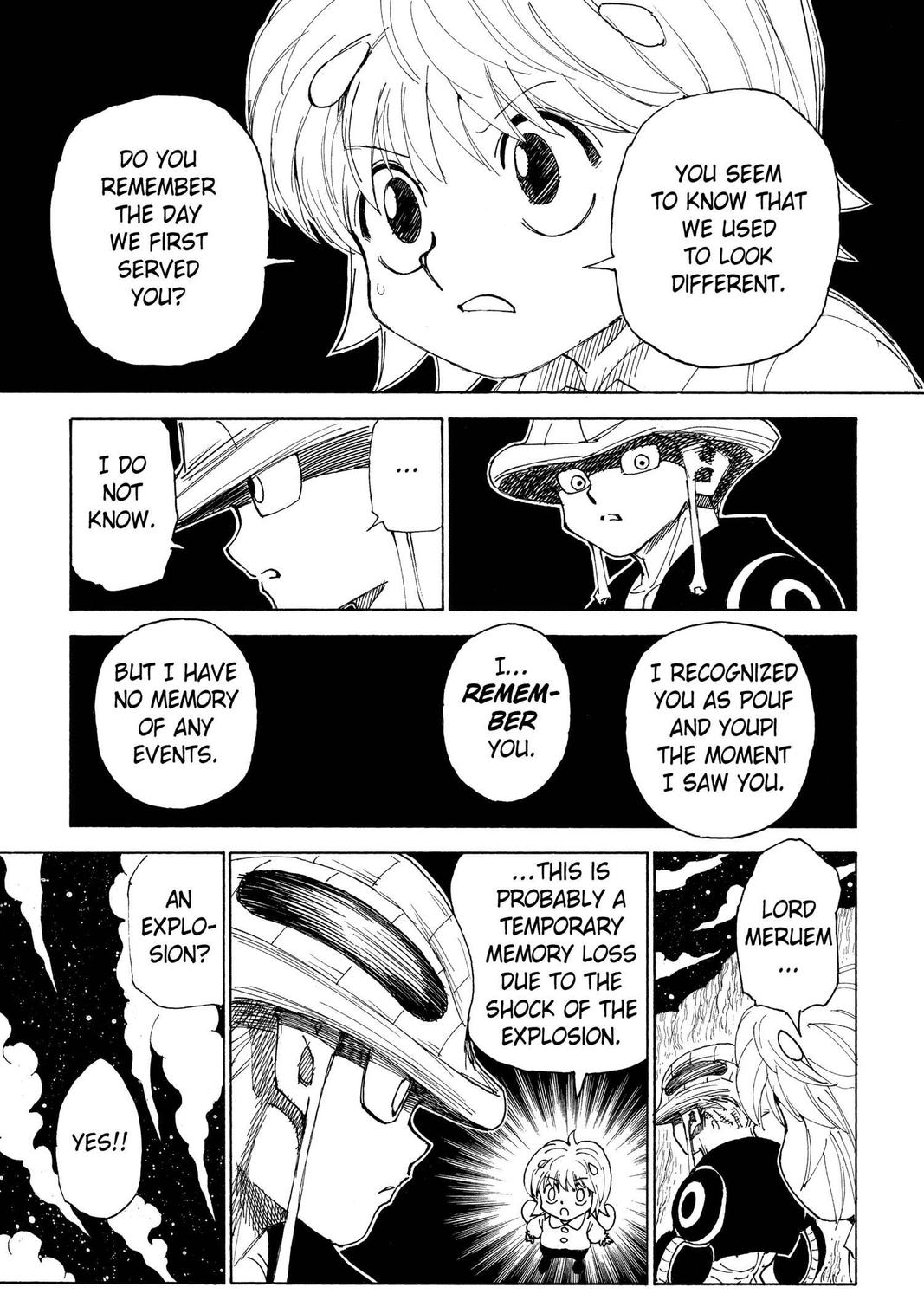


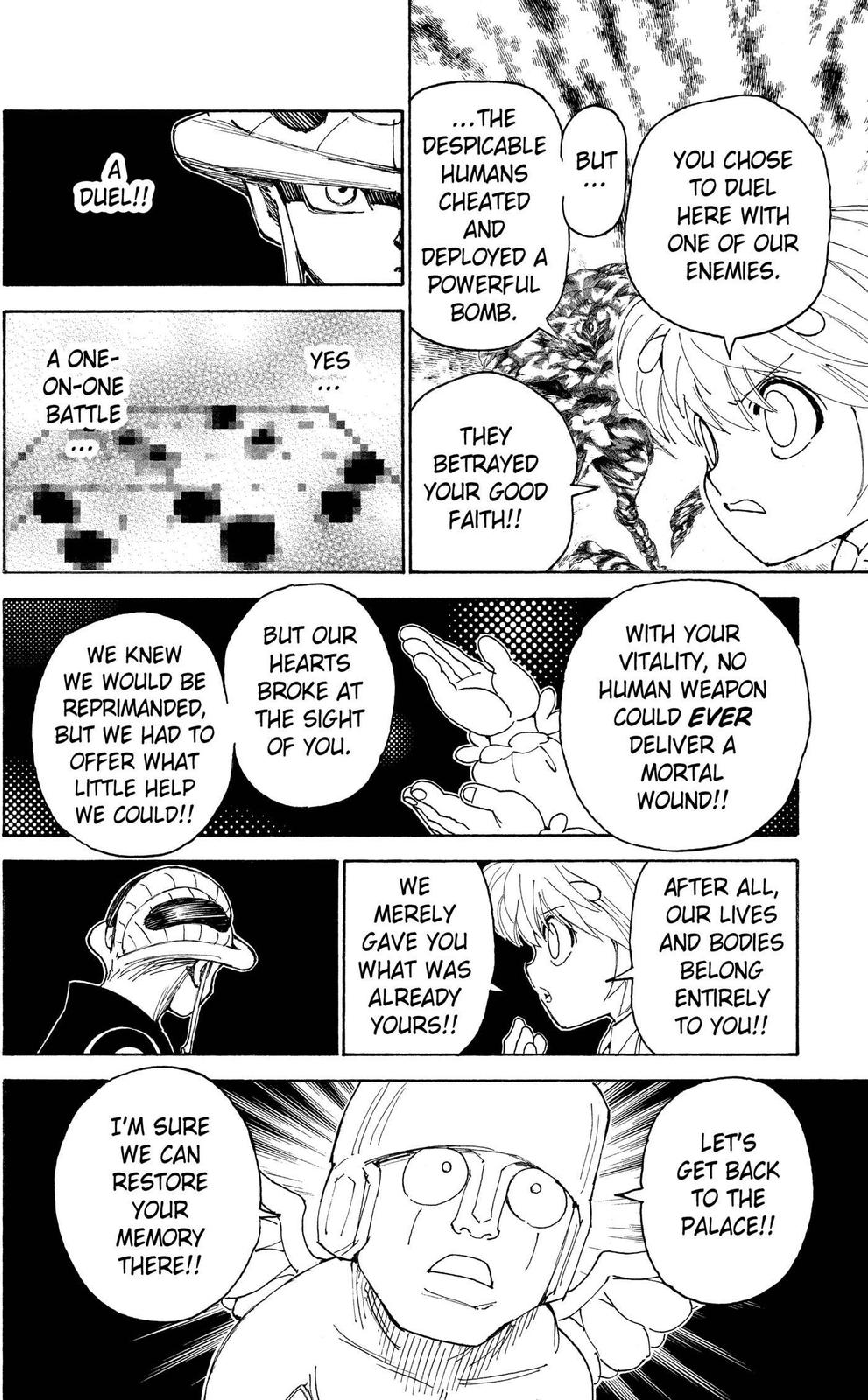

HE'S STRONGER THAN BEFORE!!
OUR FLESH HEALED HIM!!
NOW WE'RE *PART* OF HIM!!
WHAT HONOR!! WHAT SUPREME BLISS!!
IT'S AS IF WE SHARE HIS HEARTBEAT...
...HIS VERY **CONSCIOUSNESS**!!
BUT...
...BECAUSE OF THAT...
...WE CAN TELL!!
THE KING IS CONFUSED!

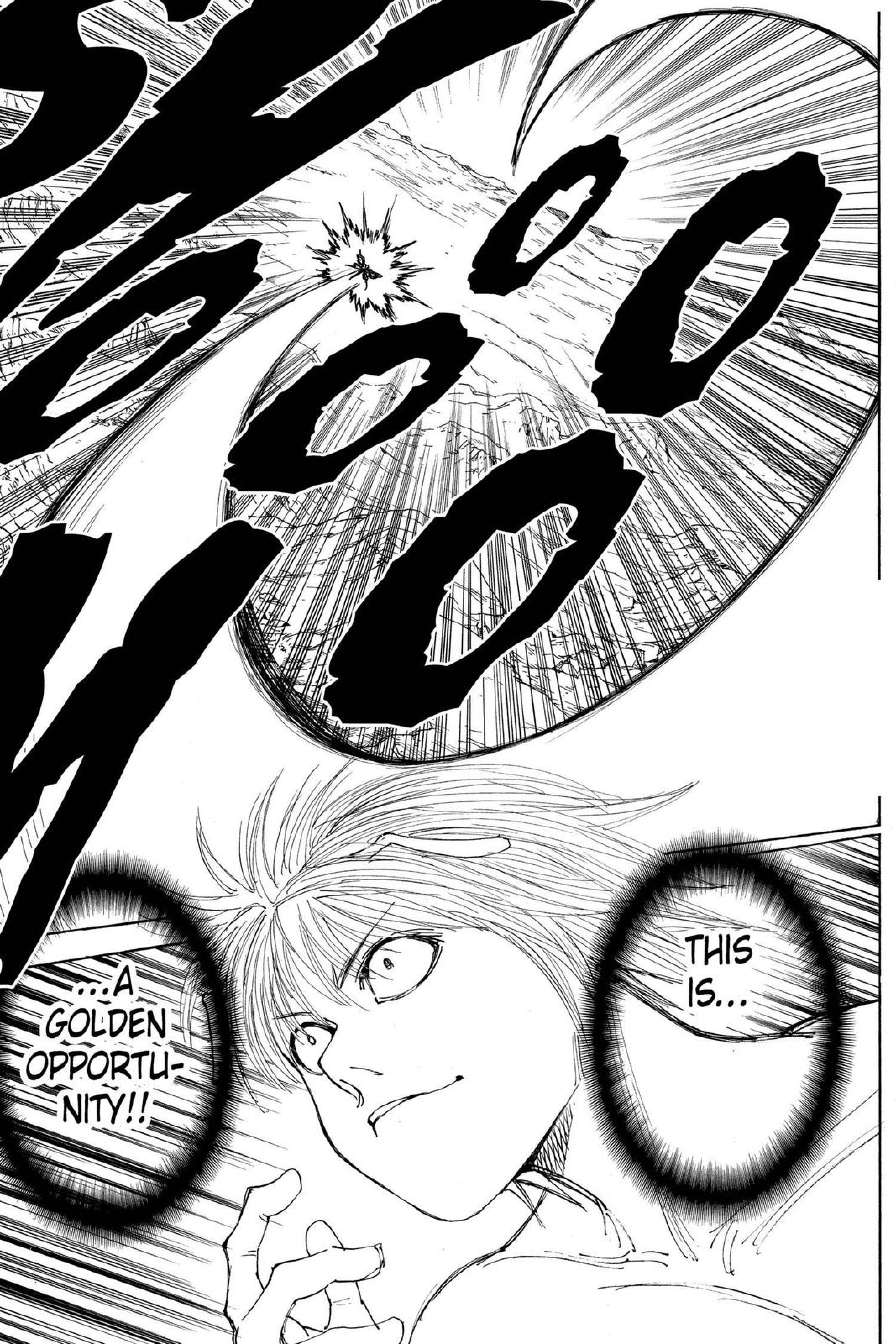

...
SIRE!!
LORD MERUEM ...HOW DO YOU FEEL?
PERHAPS WE SHOULD RETURN TO THE PALACE...
IF YOU WISH TO FEED AT GREATER LENGTH, I AM HONORED TO PROVIDE.
THE REST OF ME WILL CATCH UP IN A FEW MINUTES ...
FEED... YES...
SO THAT WAS REAL...
SOMEONE CALLED MY NAME IN THE BLINDING LIGHT.
"MERUEM."
I CANNOT TELL IF IT WAS *REAL* OR A *DREAM*.
I CANNOT REMEMBER ...
...WHY I AM HERE!!

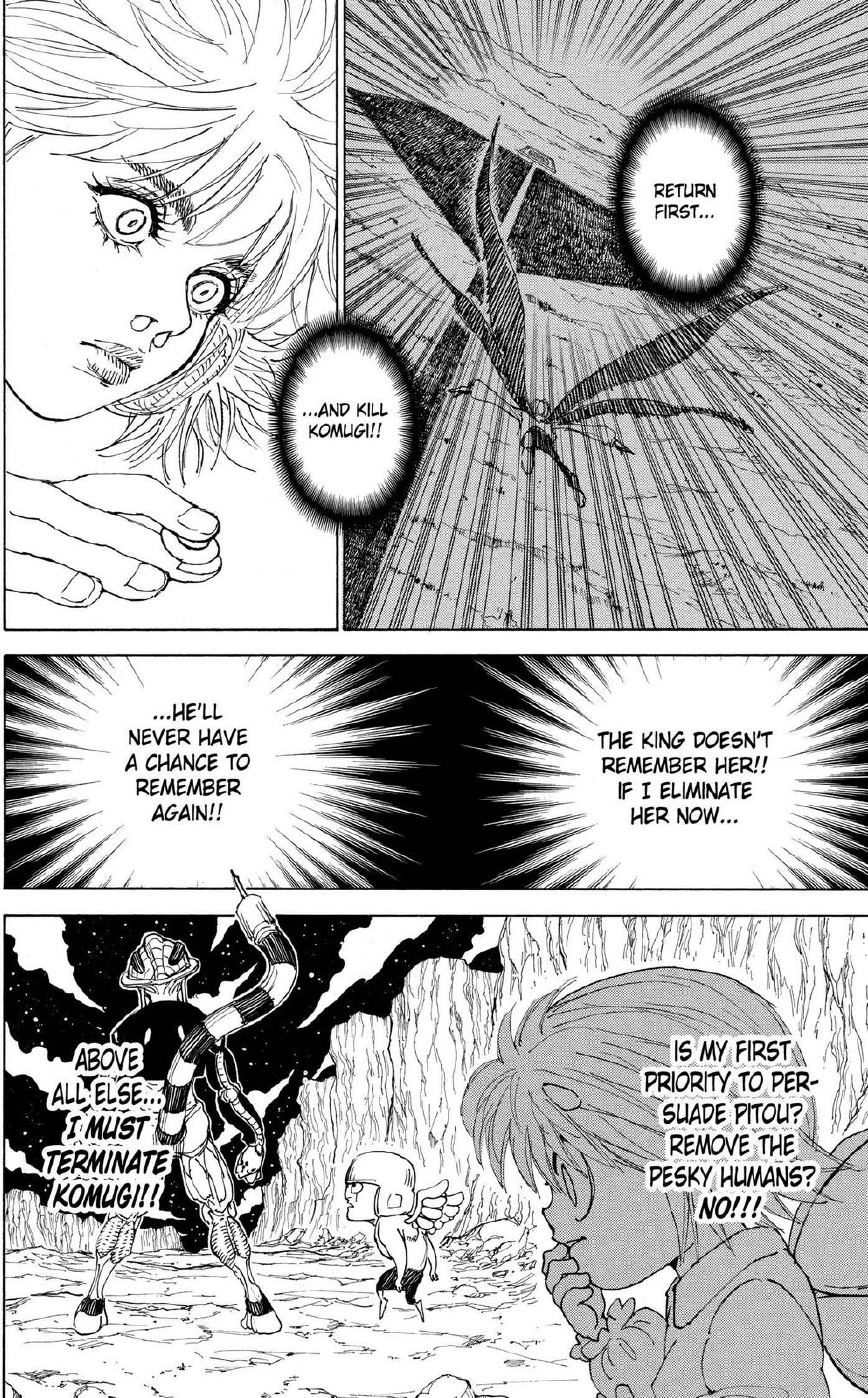

HIS MEMORY ...
I FEEL FINE.
FULL OF ENERGY, IN FACT.
ONLY MY MIND ...
...IS IN A FOG.
YOU TWO.
WHY DO YOU LOOK LIKE THAT?
...
WE SENT SEGMENTS OF OURSELVES TO RECON.
TO FIND AND ELIMINATE THE ENEMY STRAGGLERS.

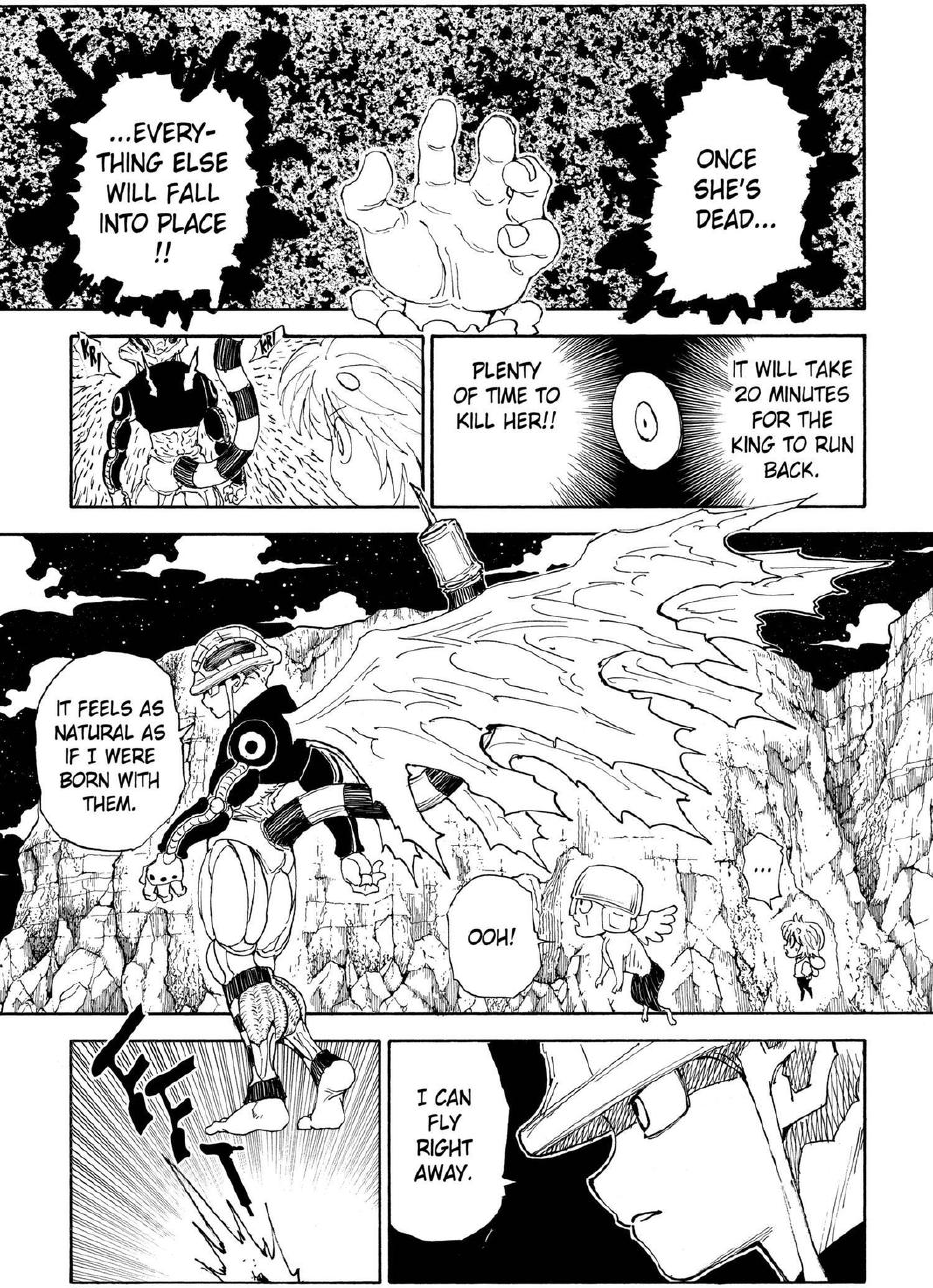

THIS IS THE LAST TIME I WILL SAY THIS.
EVEN IF YOU DO IT OUT OF LOVE...
...LYING TO ME IS A BREACH OF TRUST.
I ***ATE*** YOU...
...DIDN'T I?
WE OFFERED OURSELVES!!
IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN TOO FORWARD OF US!!
BUT IT'S WHAT WE WANTED!!
WHAT HAPPENED HERE?
EXPLAIN YOURSELVES!!
TO DO THAT...
...I NEED TO CONFIRM A FEW THINGS.

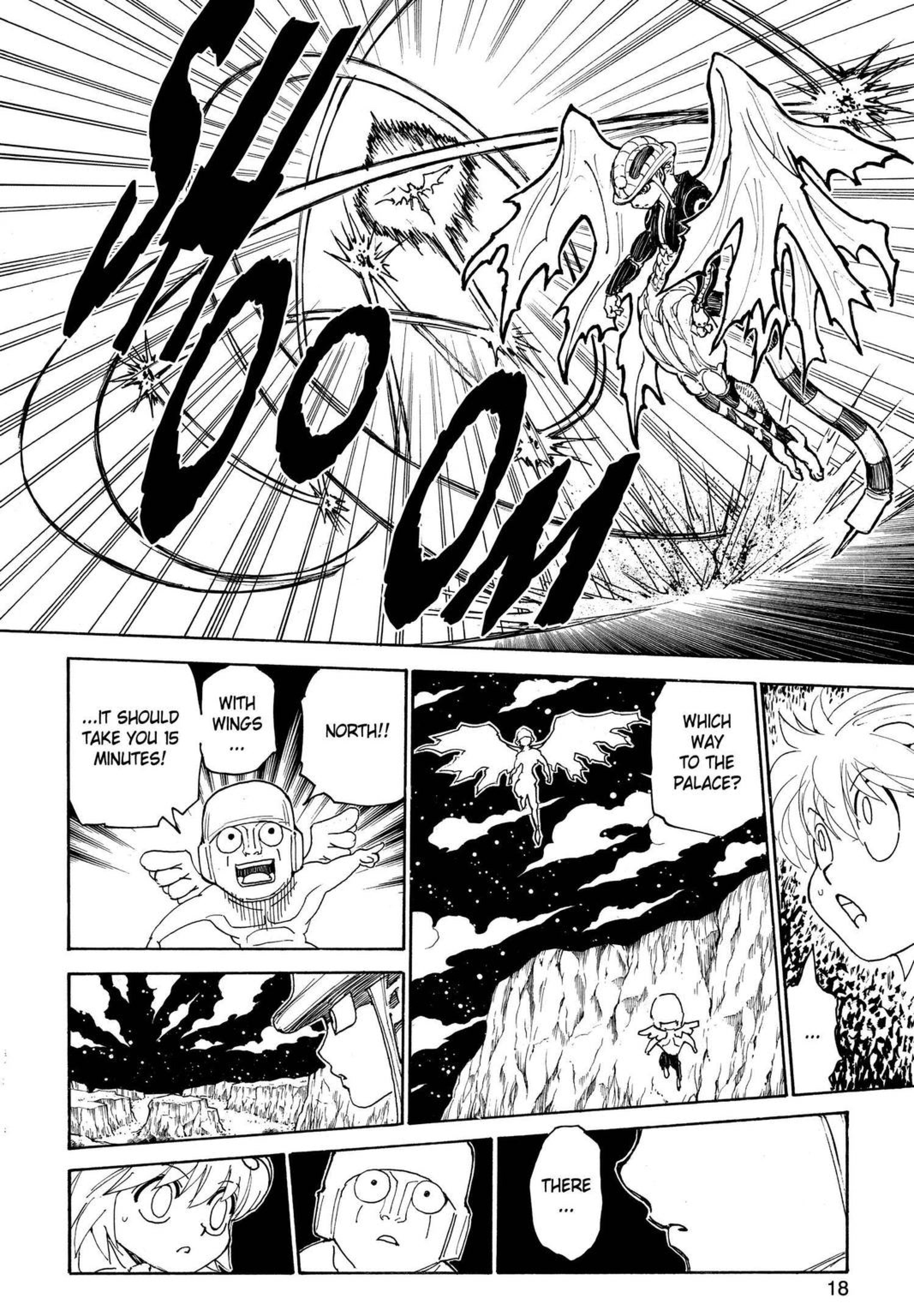

YOU SEEM TO KNOW THAT WE USED TO LOOK DIFFERENT.
DO YOU REMEMBER THE DAY WE FIRST SERVED YOU?
...
I DO NOT KNOW.
I RECOGNIZED YOU AS POUF AND YOUPI THE MOMENT I SAW YOU.
I... *REMEMBER* YOU.
BUT I HAVE NO MEMORY OF ANY EVENTS.
LORD MERUEM ...
...THIS IS PROBABLY A TEMPORARY MEMORY LOSS DUE TO THE SHOCK OF THE EXPLOSION.
AN EXPLOSION?
YES!!

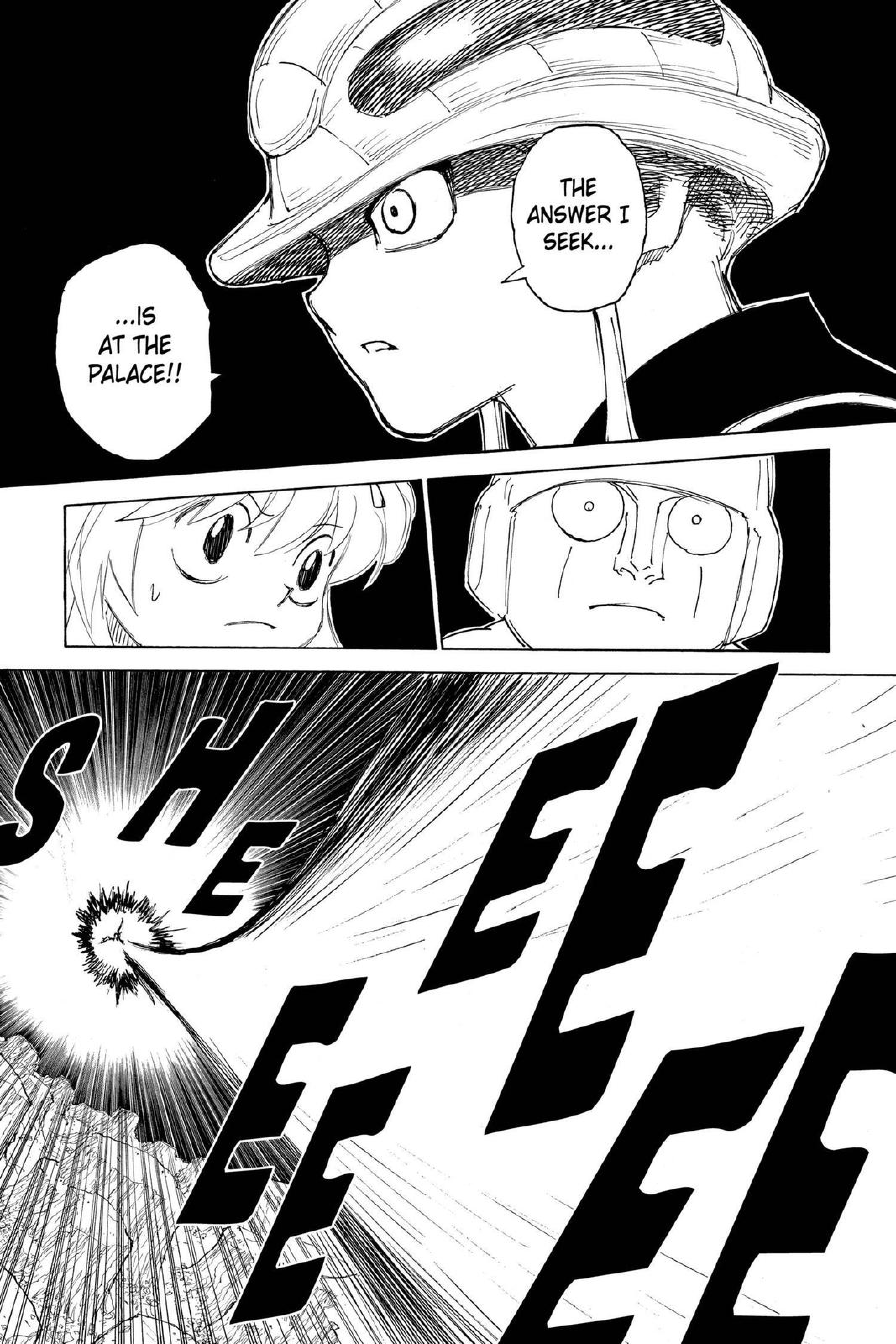

YOU CHOSE TO DUEL HERE WITH ONE OF OUR ENEMIES.
BUT ...
...THE DESPICABLE HUMANS CHEATED AND DEPLOYED A POWERFUL BOMB.
THEY BETRAYED YOUR GOOD FAITH!!
A DUEL!!
YES ...
A ONE-ON-ONE BATTLE ...
WITH YOUR VITALITY, NO HUMAN WEAPON COULD *EVER* DELIVER A MORTAL WOUND!!
BUT OUR HEARTS BROKE AT THE SIGHT OF YOU.
WE KNEW WE WOULD BE REPRIMANDED, BUT WE HAD TO OFFER WHAT LITTLE HELP WE COULD!!
AFTER ALL, OUR LIVES AND BODIES BELONG ENTIRELY TO YOU!!
WE MERELY GAVE YOU WHAT WAS ALREADY YOURS!!
LET'S GET BACK TO THE PALACE!!
I'M SURE WE CAN RESTORE YOUR MEMORY THERE!!

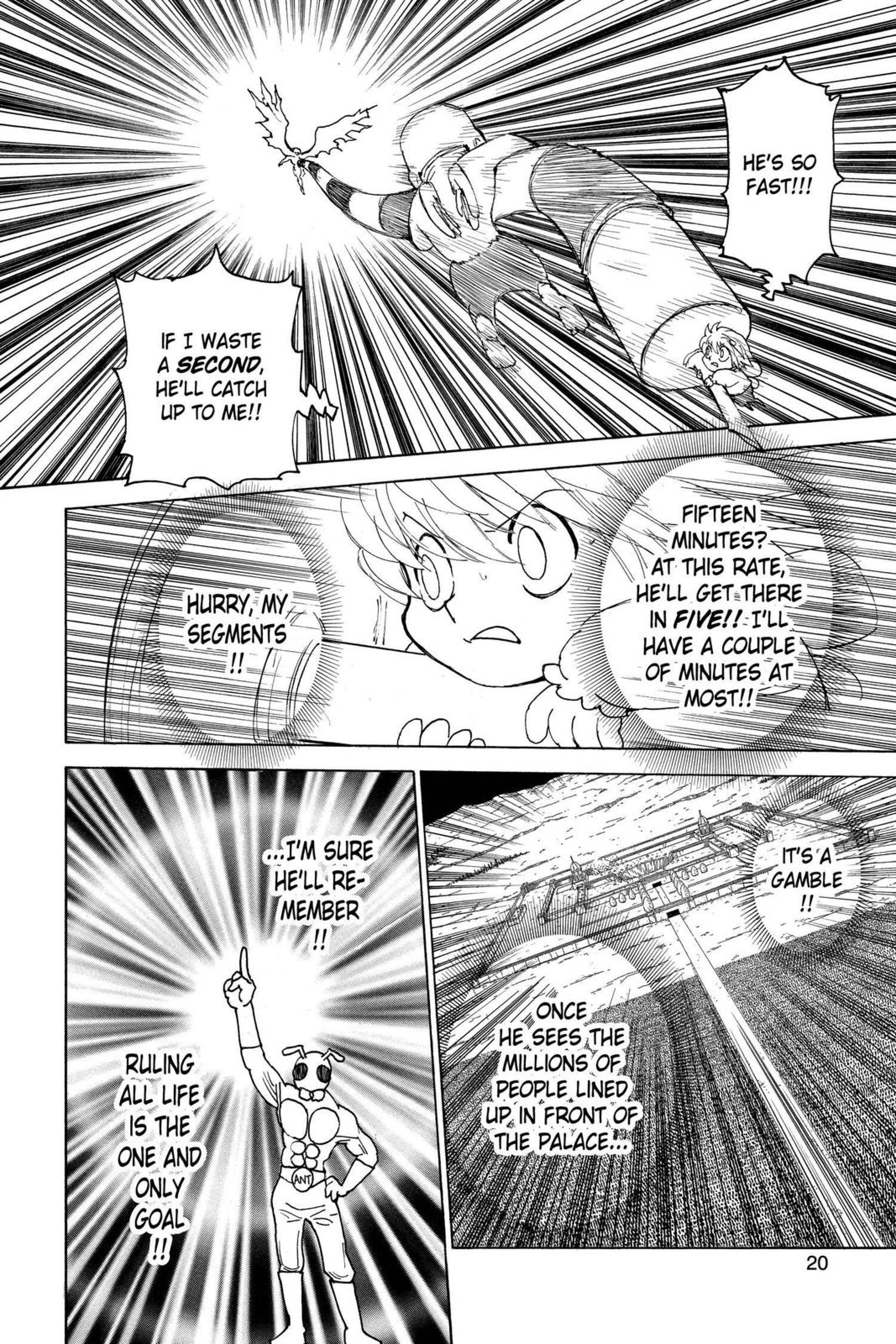

THIS IS...
...A GOLDEN OPPORTUNITY!!

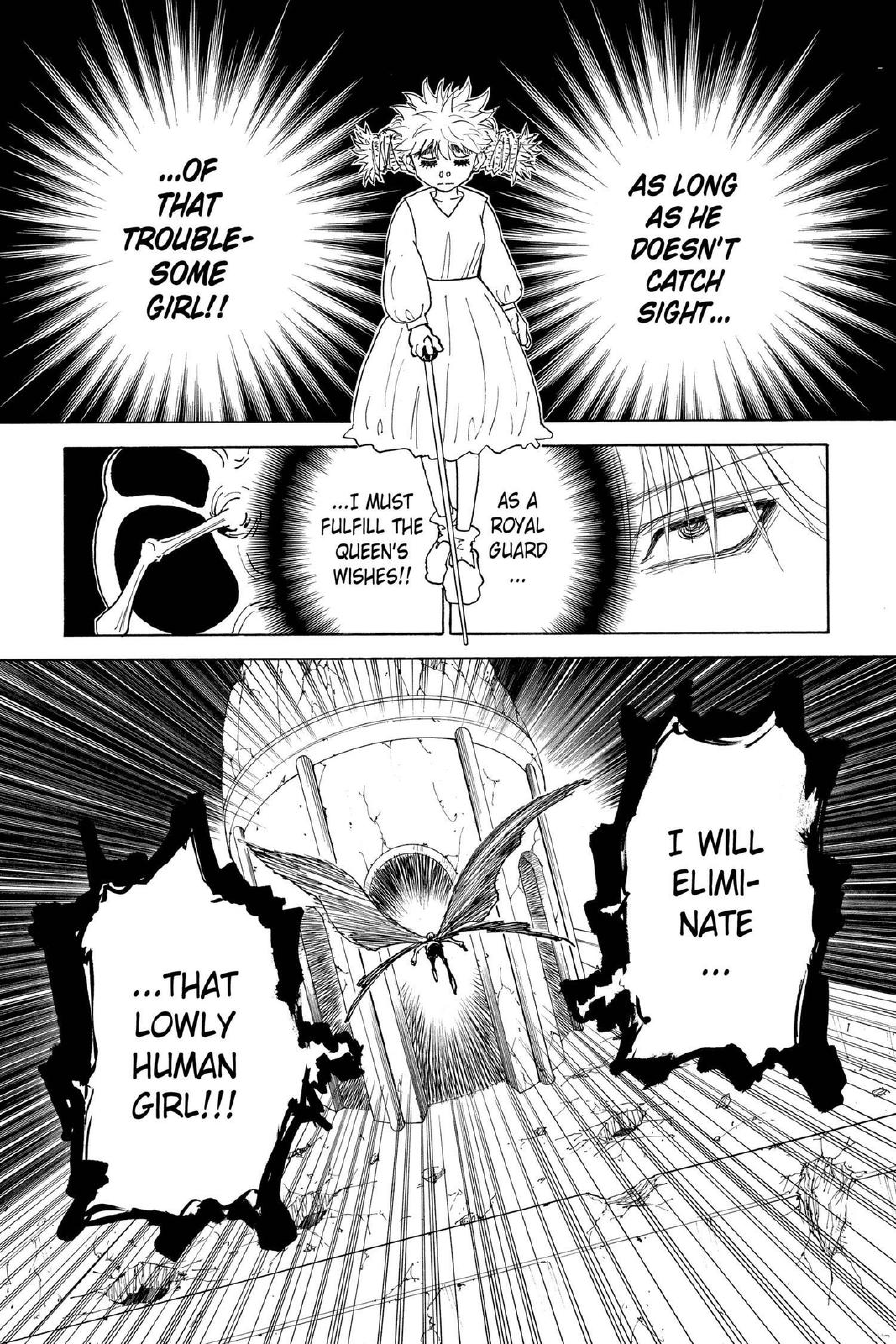

RETURN FIRST...
...AND KILL KOMUGI!!
THE KING DOESN'T REMEMBER HER!! IF I ELIMINATE HER NOW...
...HE'LL NEVER HAVE A CHANCE TO REMEMBER AGAIN!!
IS MY FIRST PRIORITY TO PERSUADE PITOU? REMOVE THE PESKY HUMANS? NO!!!
ABOVE ALL ELSE... I MUST TERMINATE KOMUGI!!

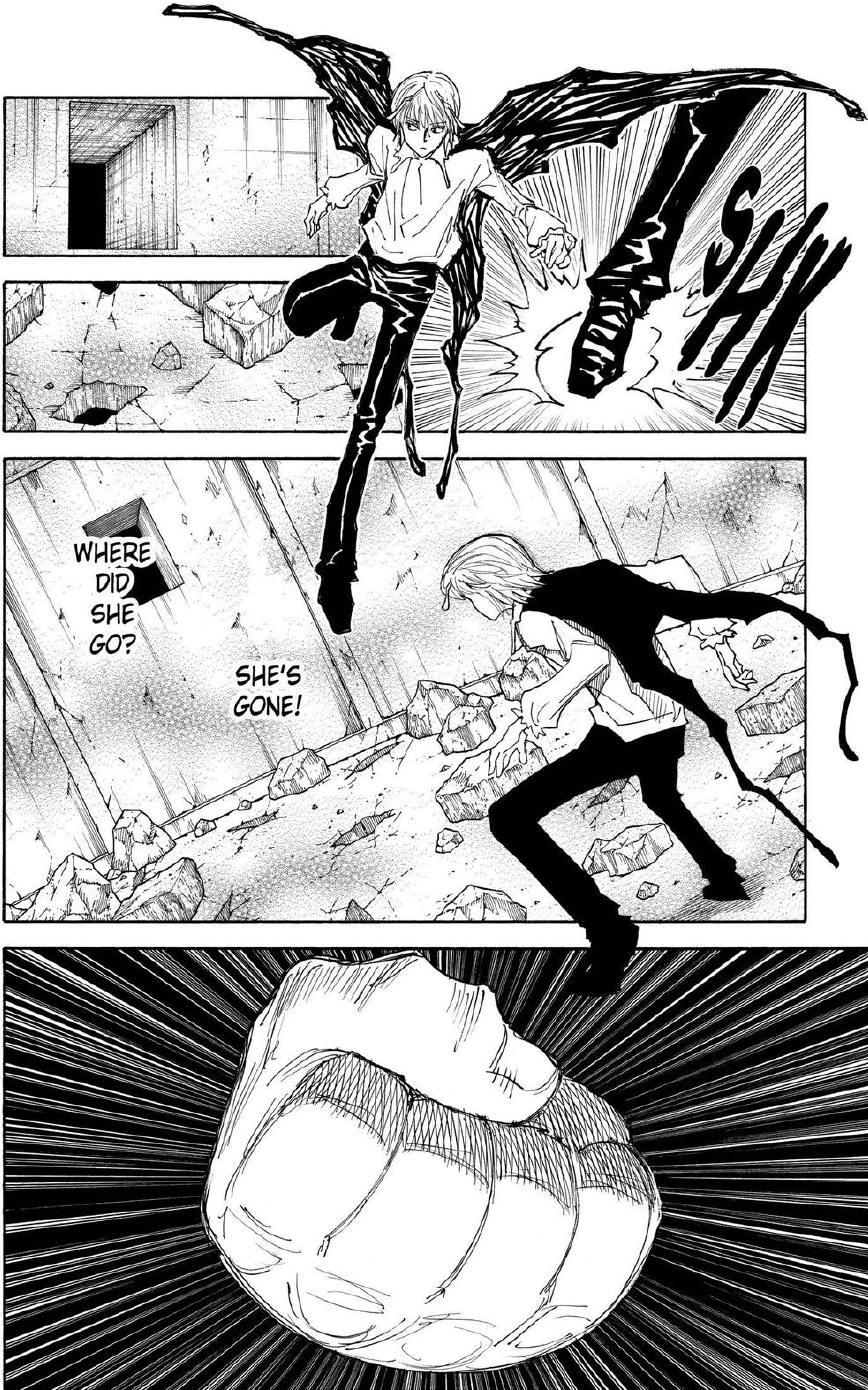

ONCE SHE'S DEAD...
...EVERYTHING ELSE WILL FALL INTO PLACE!!
IT WILL TAKE 20 MINUTES FOR THE KING TO RUN BACK.
PLENTY OF TIME TO KILL HER!!
KRI
KRI
...
OOH!
IT FEELS AS NATURAL AS IF I WERE BORN WITH THEM.
I CAN FLY RIGHT AWAY.
LIFT

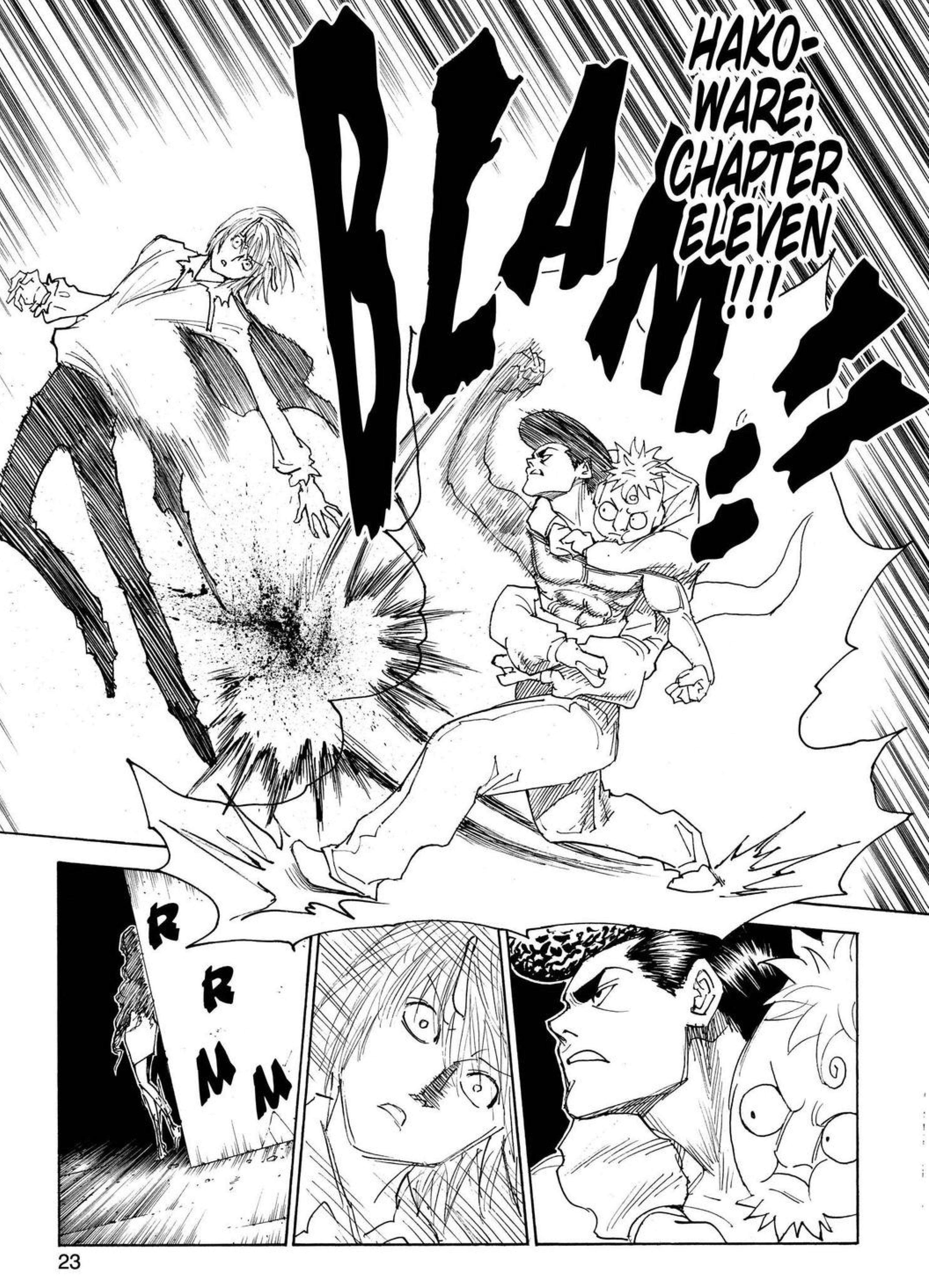

SHOOOM
...
WHICH WAY TO THE PALACE?
NORTH!!
WITH WINGS ...
...IT SHOULD TAKE YOU 15 MINUTES!
THERE ...

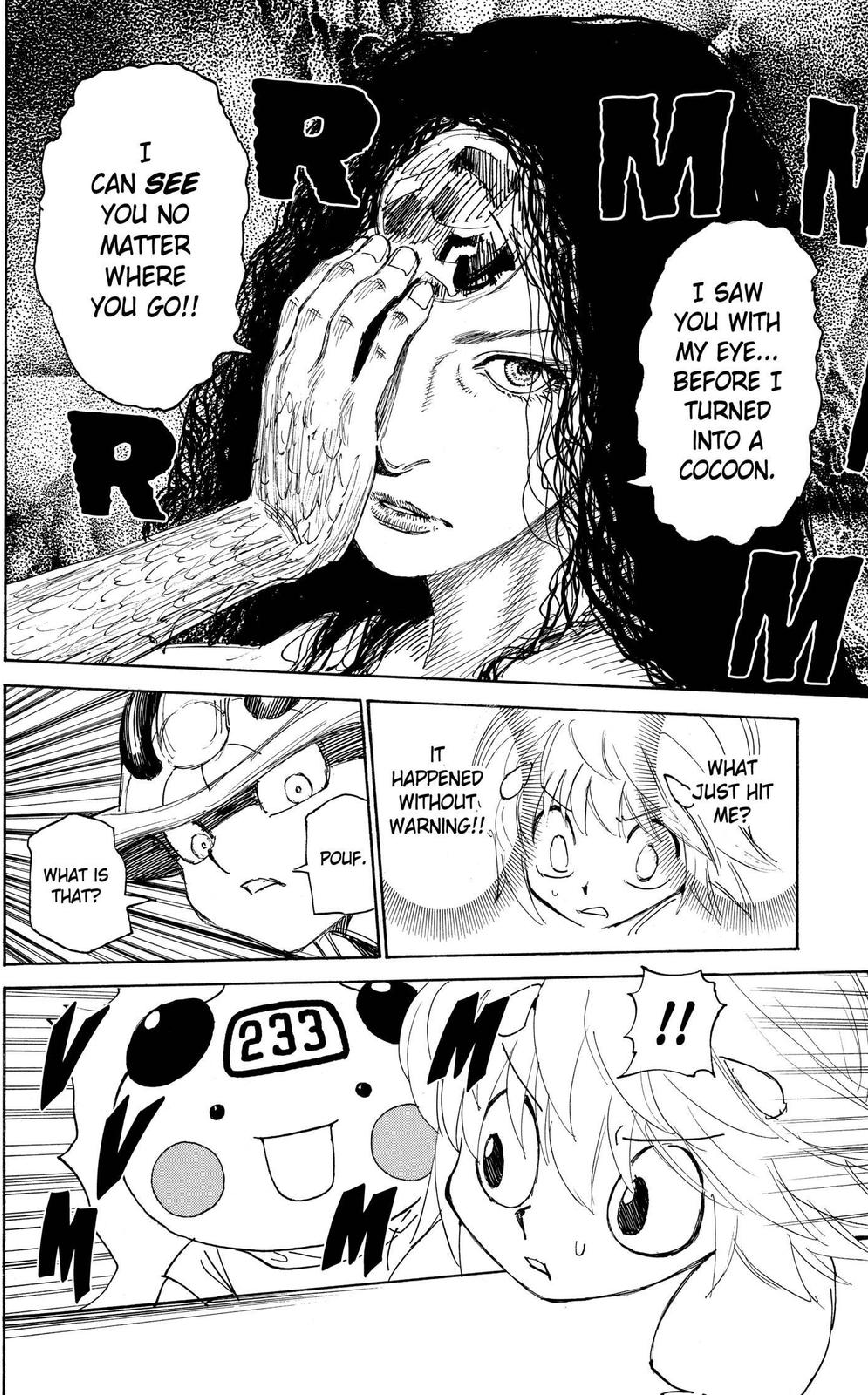

THE ANSWER I SEEK...
...IS AT THE PALACE!!
SHEEEEEEEE


HE'S SO FAST!!!
IF I WASTE A *SECOND*, HE'LL CATCH UP TO ME!!
FIFTEEN MINUTES? AT THIS RATE, HE'LL GET THERE IN *FIVE!!* I'LL HAVE A COUPLE OF MINUTES AT MOST!!
HURRY, MY SEGMENTS!!
IT'S A GAMBLE!!
ONCE HE SEES THE MILLIONS OF PEOPLE LINED UP IN FRONT OF THE PALACE...
...I'M SURE HE'LL REMEMBER!!
RULING ALL LIFE IS THE ONE AND ONLY GOAL!!
ANT

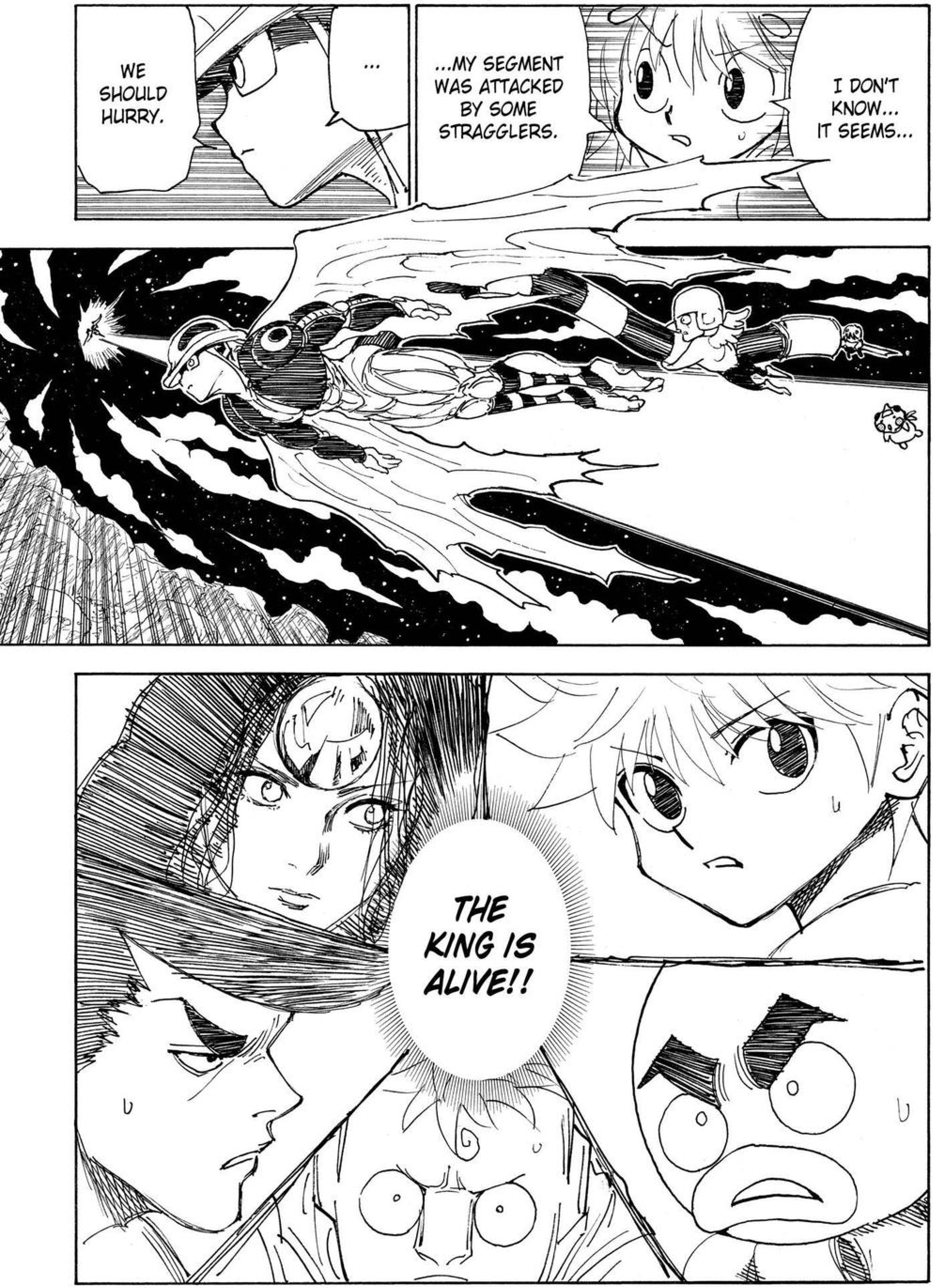

AS LONG AS HE DOESN'T CATCH SIGHT...
...OF THAT TROUBLESOME GIRL!!
AS A ROYAL GUARD ...
...I MUST FULFILL THE QUEEN'S WISHES!!
I WILL ELIMINATE ...
...THAT LOWLY HUMAN GIRL!!!


SHK
WHERE DID SHE GO?
SHE'S GONE!

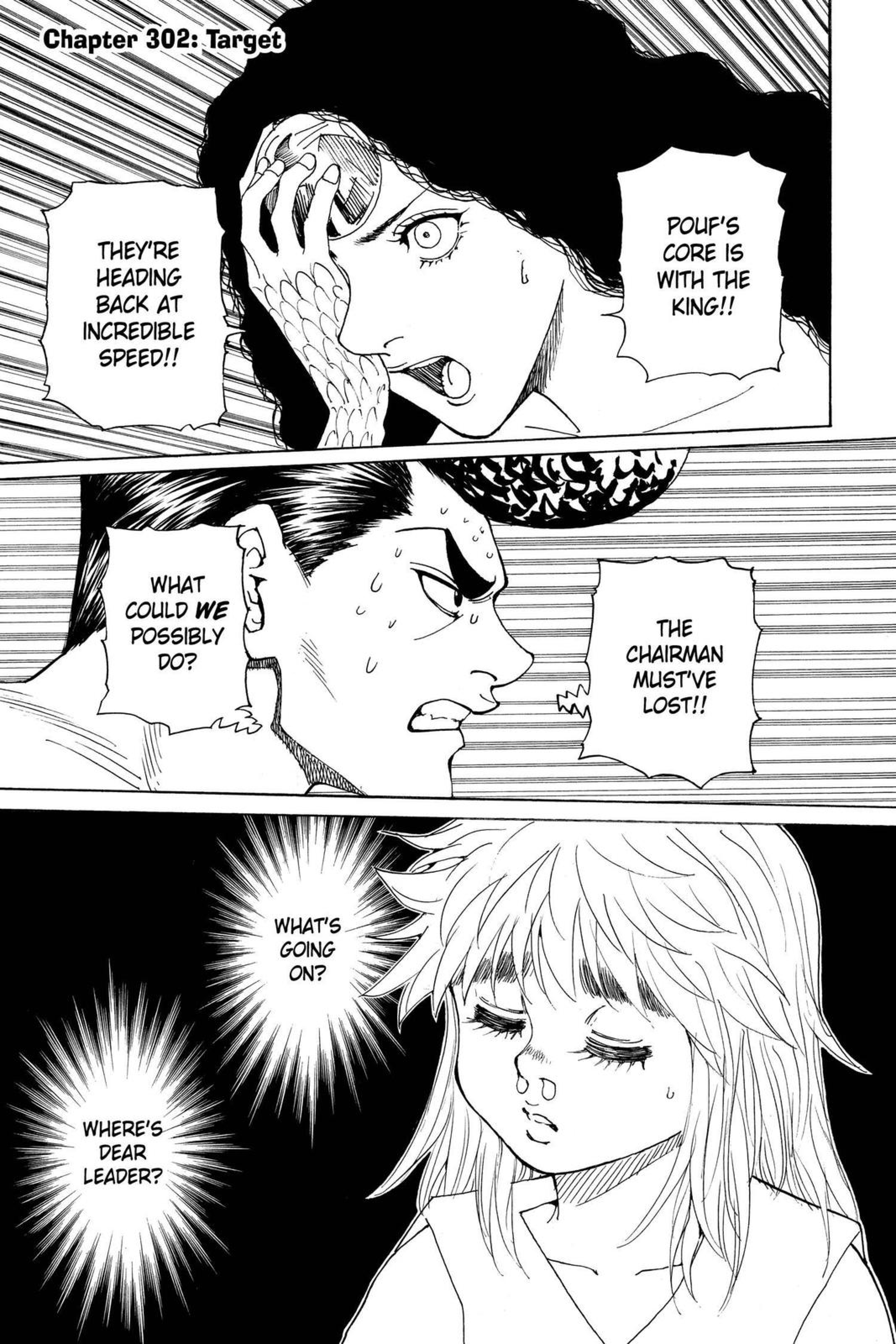

HAKO-WARE: CHAPTER ELEVEN!!!
BLAM!!
RRMM


I SAW YOU WITH MY EYE... BEFORE I TURNED INTO A COCOON.
I CAN *SEE* YOU NO MATTER WHERE YOU GO!!
RR
MMMM
WHAT JUST HIT ME?
IT HAPPENED WITHOUT WARNING!!
POUF.
WHAT IS THAT?
!!
233
VVVMMM

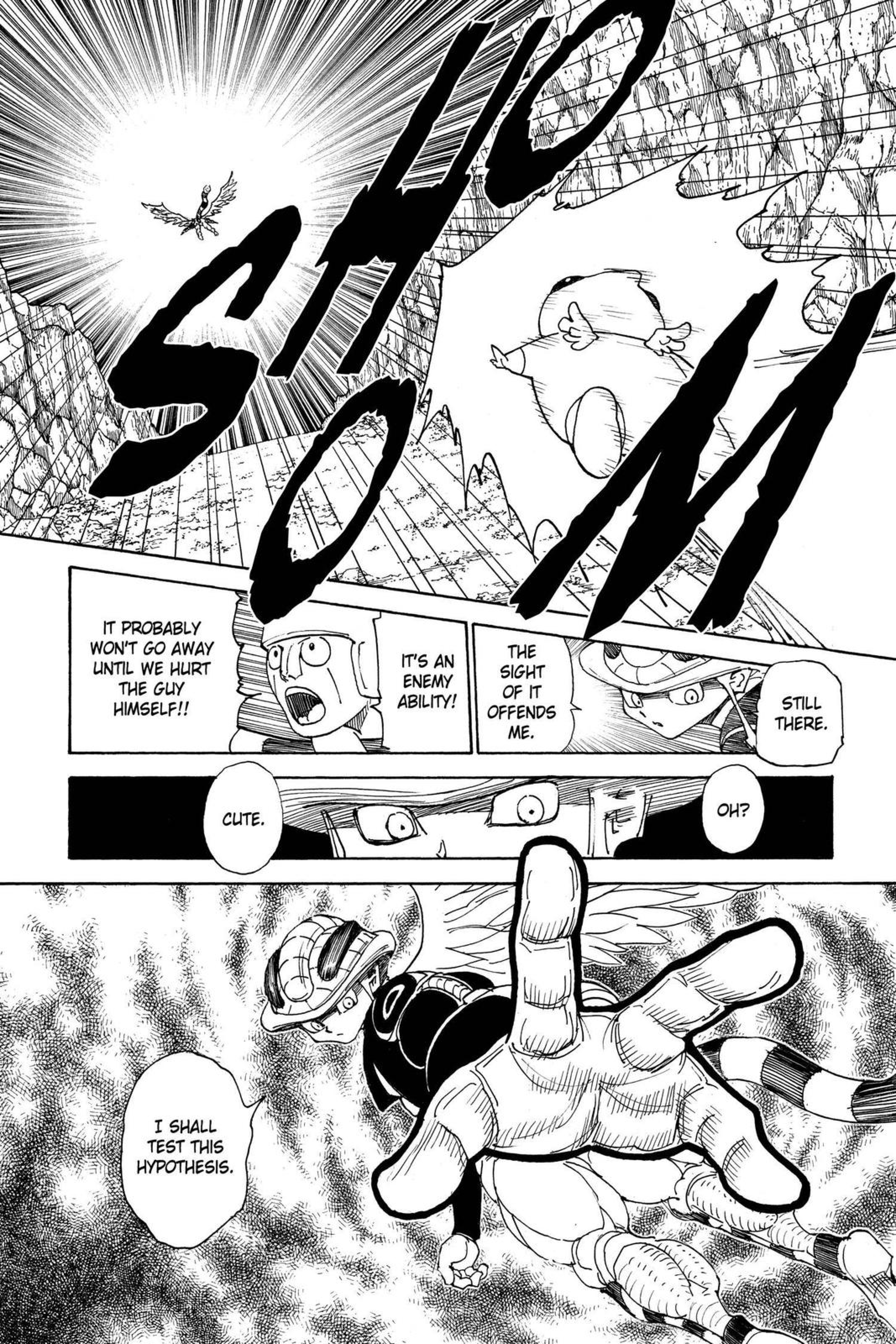
READ THIS WAY

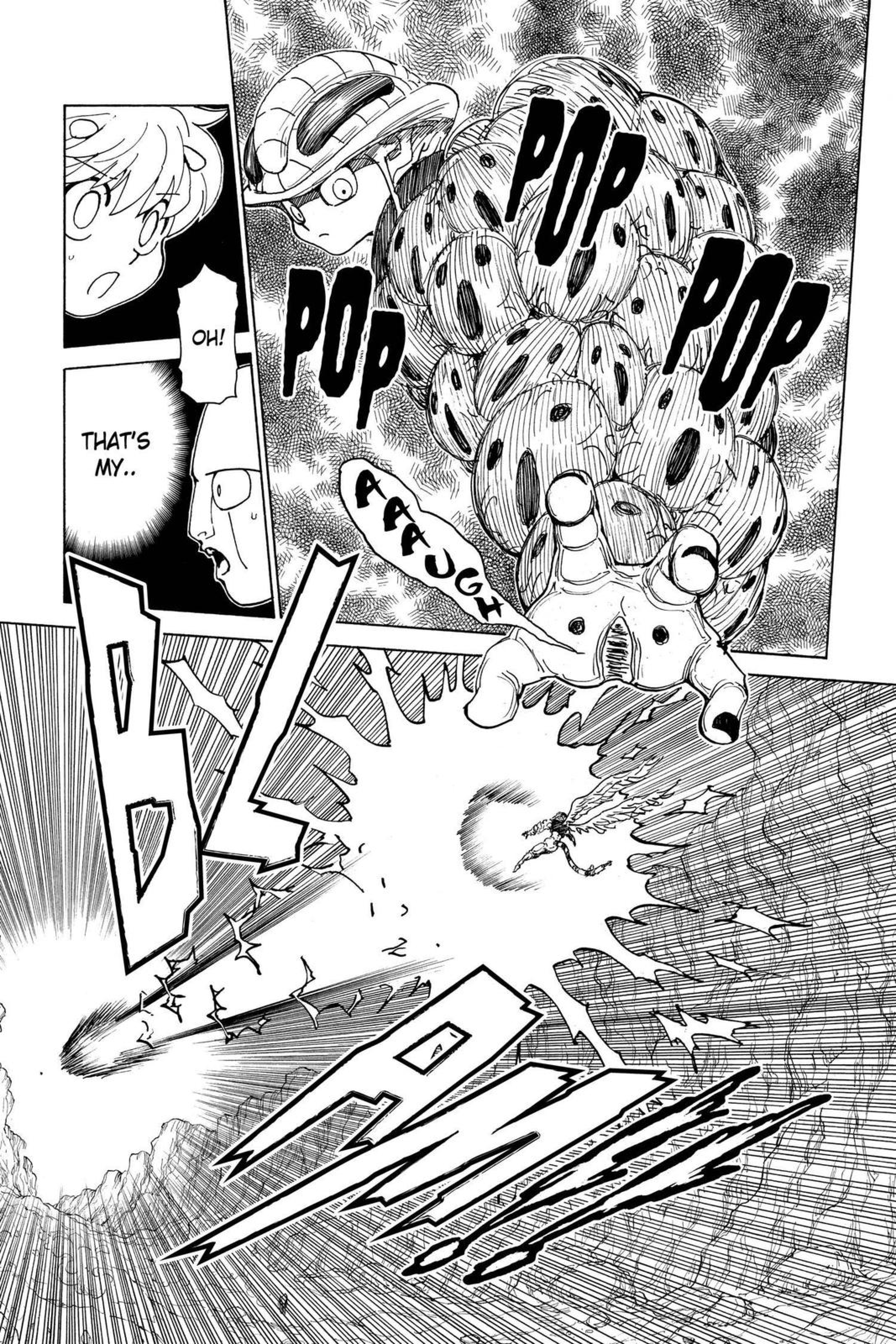

I DON'T KNOW... IT SEEMS...
...MY SEGMENT WAS ATTACKED BY SOME STRAGGLERS.
...
WE SHOULD HURRY.
THE KING IS ALIVE!!

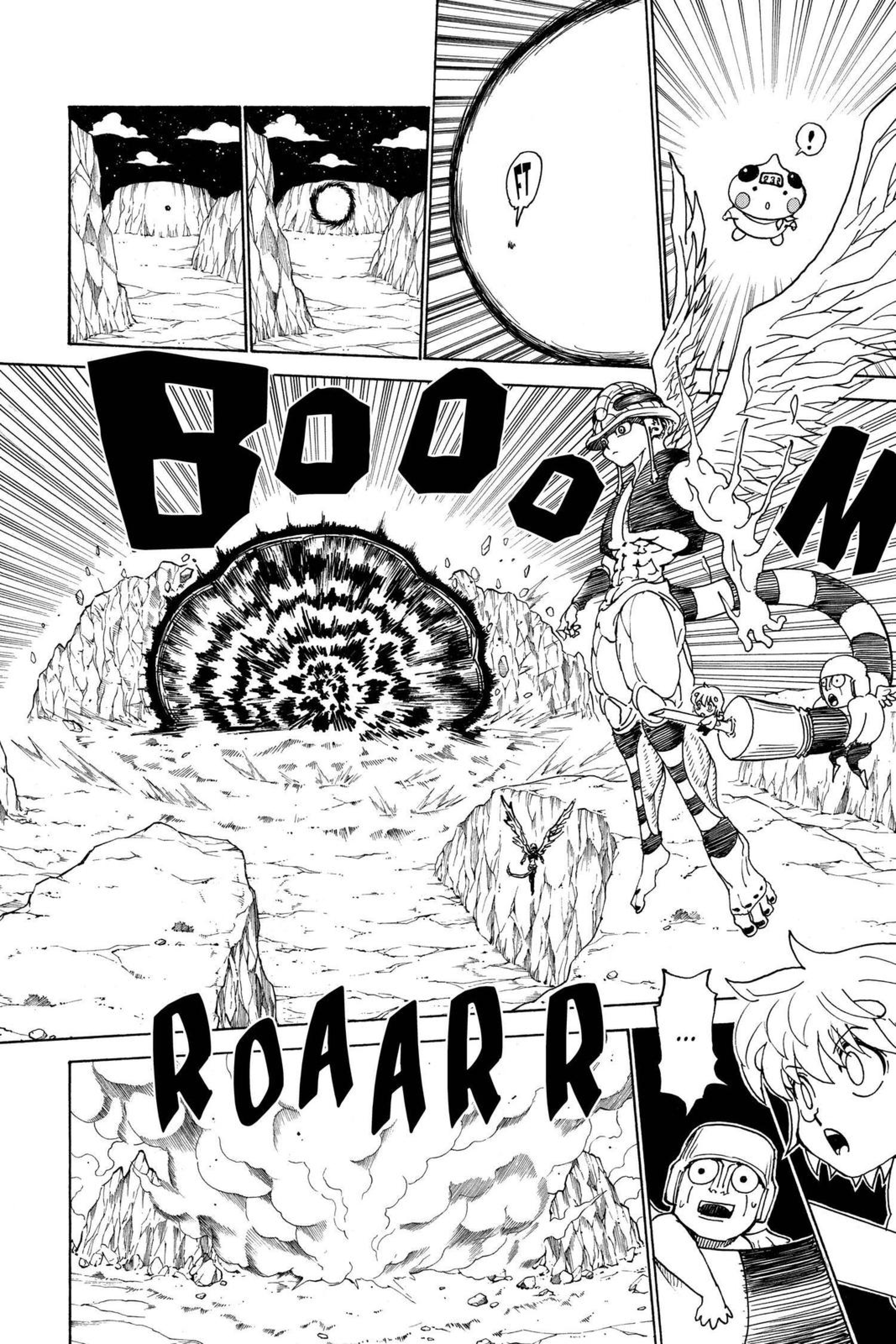
Chapter 302: Target

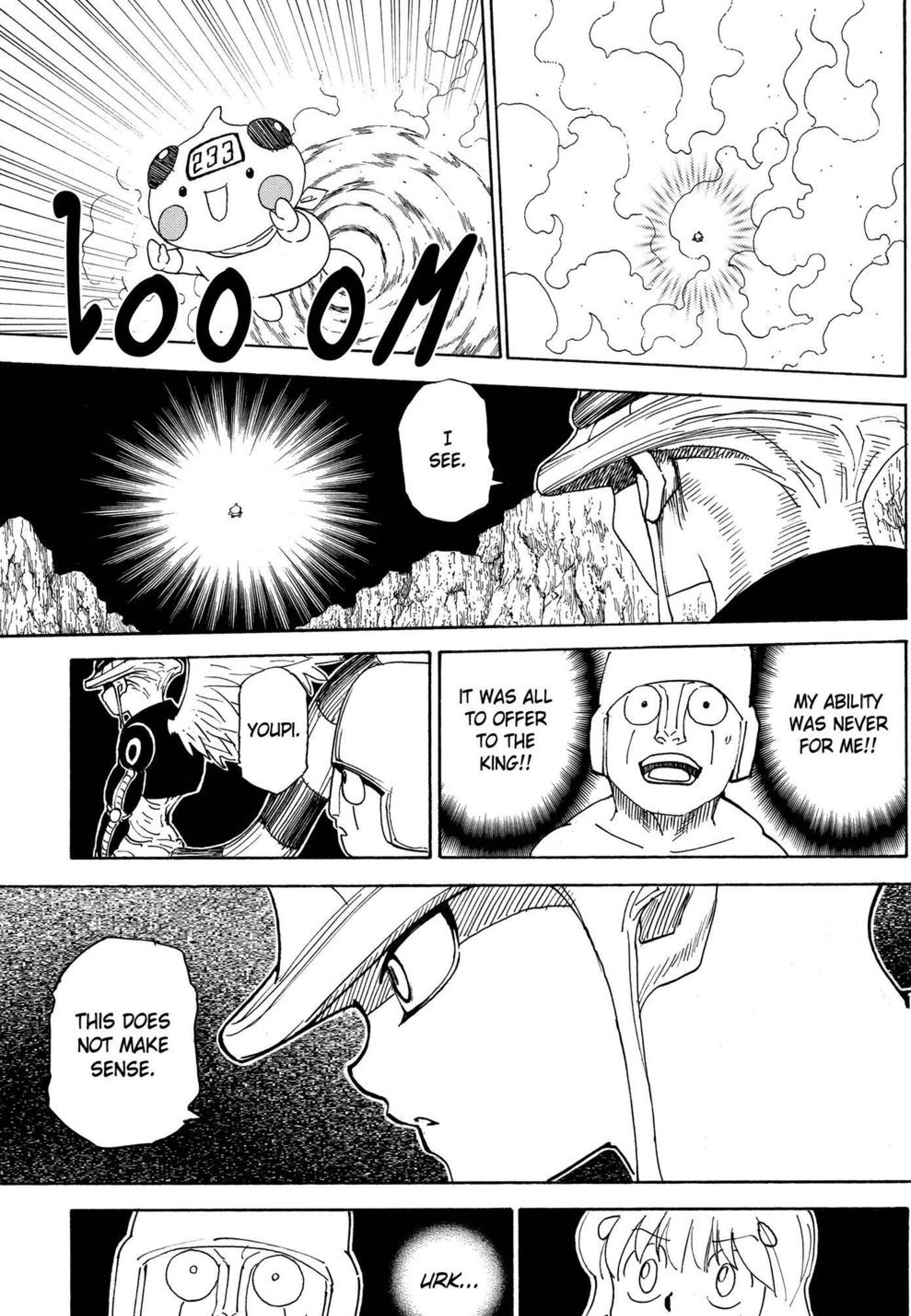

POUF'S CORE IS WITH THE KING!!
THEY'RE HEADING BACK AT INCREDIBLE SPEED!!
THE CHAIRMAN MUST'VE LOST!!
WHAT COULD ***WE*** POSSIBLY DO?
WHAT'S GOING ON?
WHERE'S DEAR LEADER?

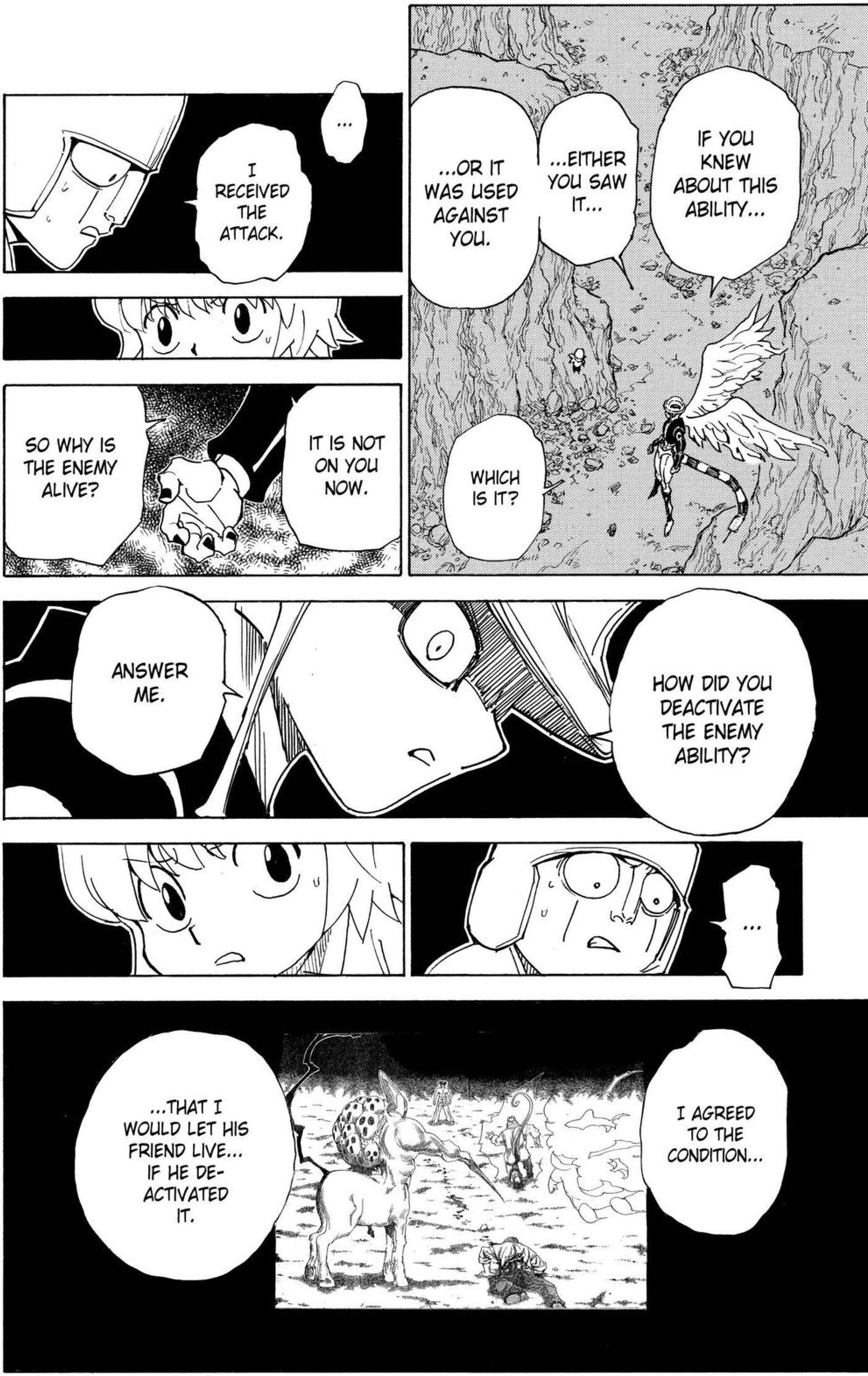
Chapter 302: Target

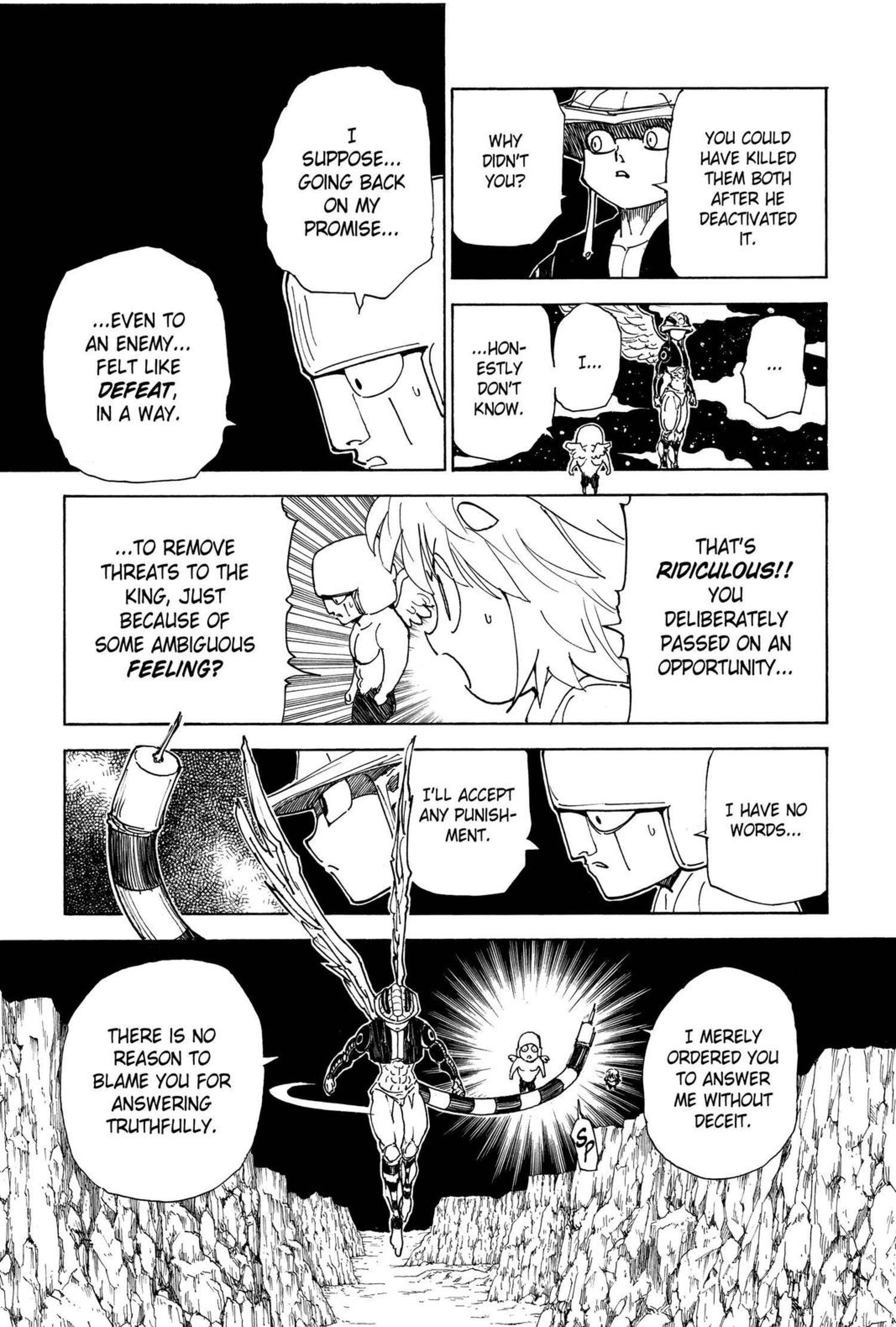

SHOOM
STILL THERE.
THE SIGHT OF IT OFFENDS ME.
IT'S AN ENEMY ABILITY!
IT PROBABLY WON'T GO AWAY UNTIL WE HURT THE GUY HIMSELF!!
OH?
CUTE.
I SHALL TEST THIS HYPOTHESIS.

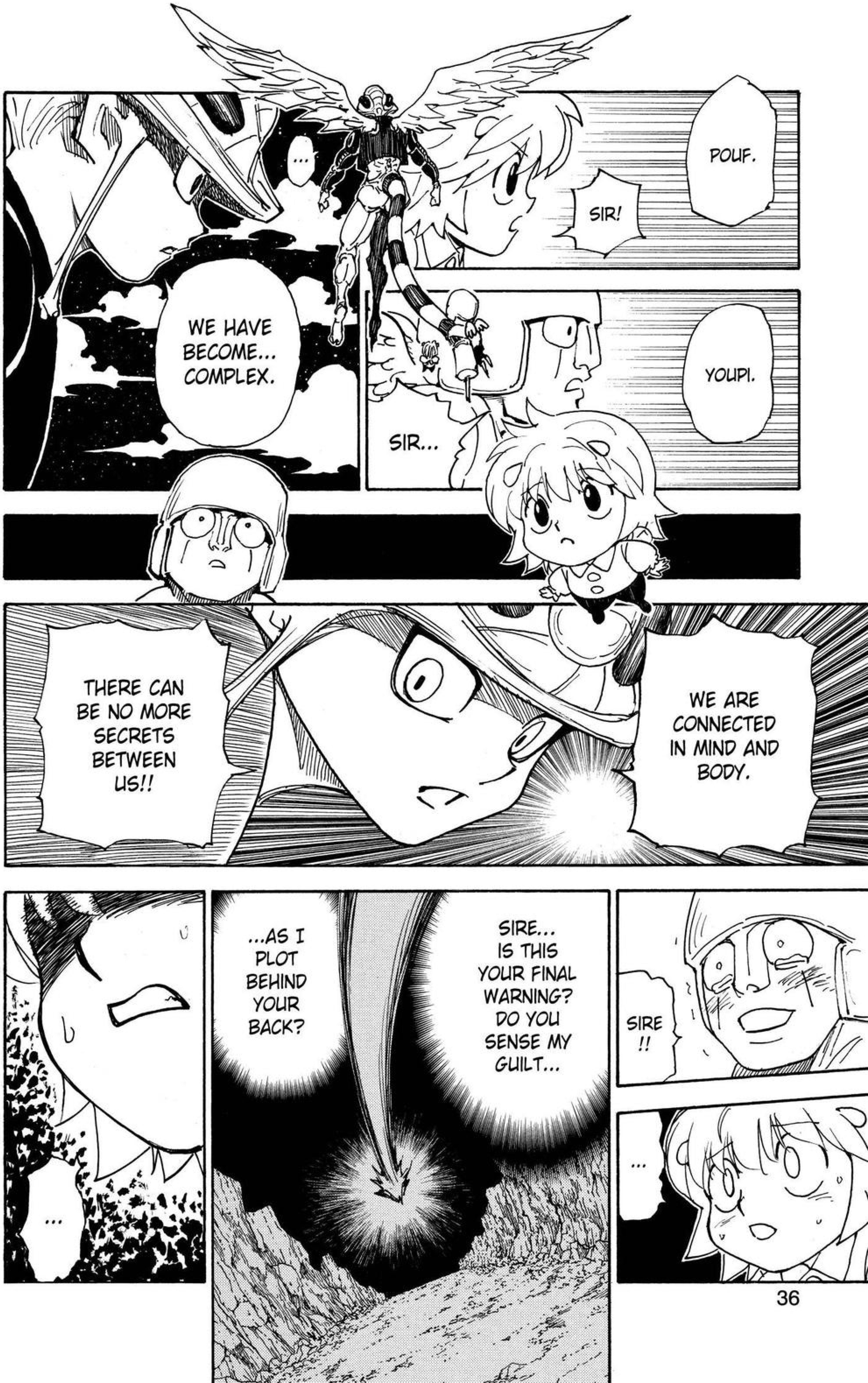

POP
POP
POP
POP
AAAUGH
OH!
THAT'S MY..
BLAM

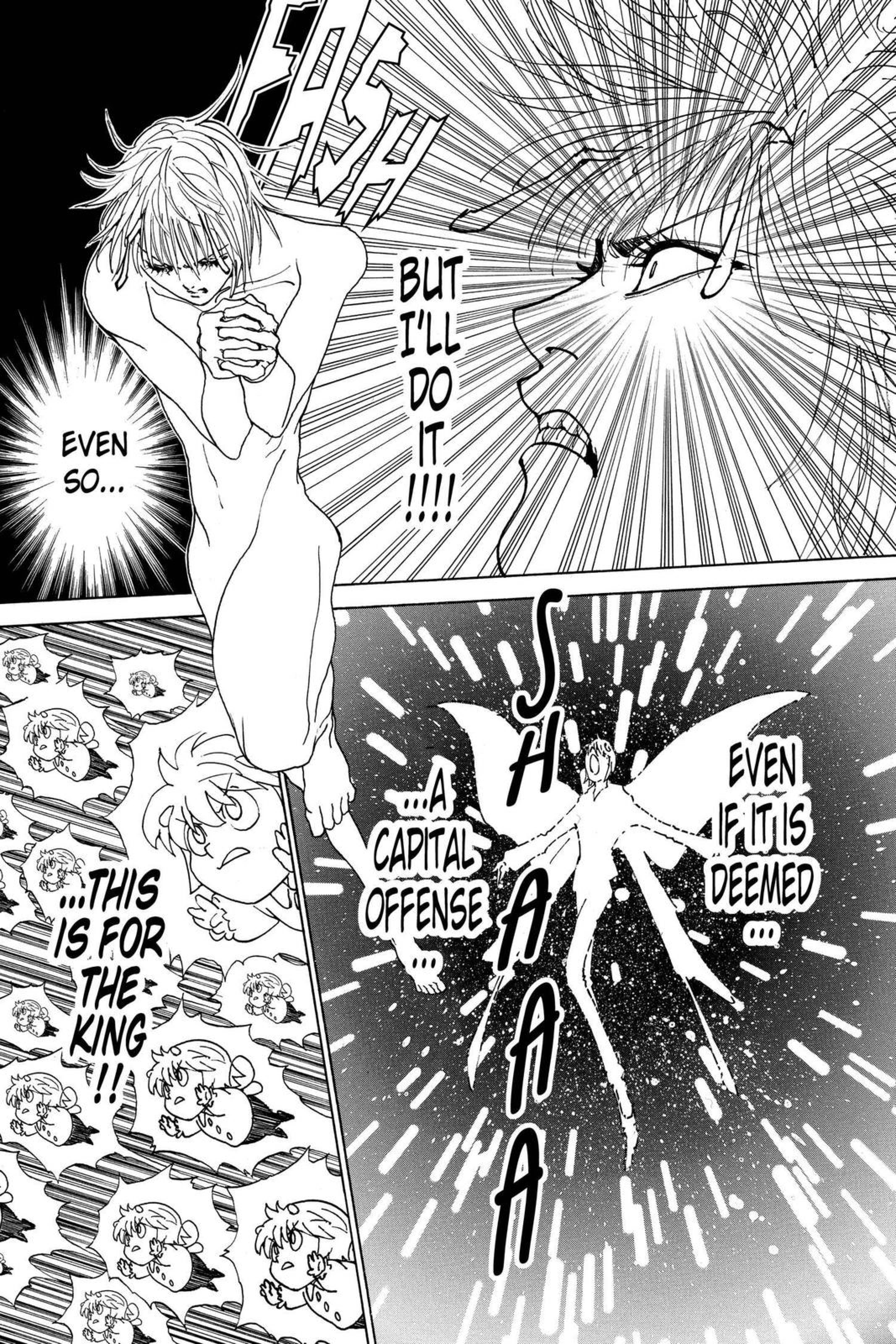

!
FT
BOOOOM
ROAARR
…

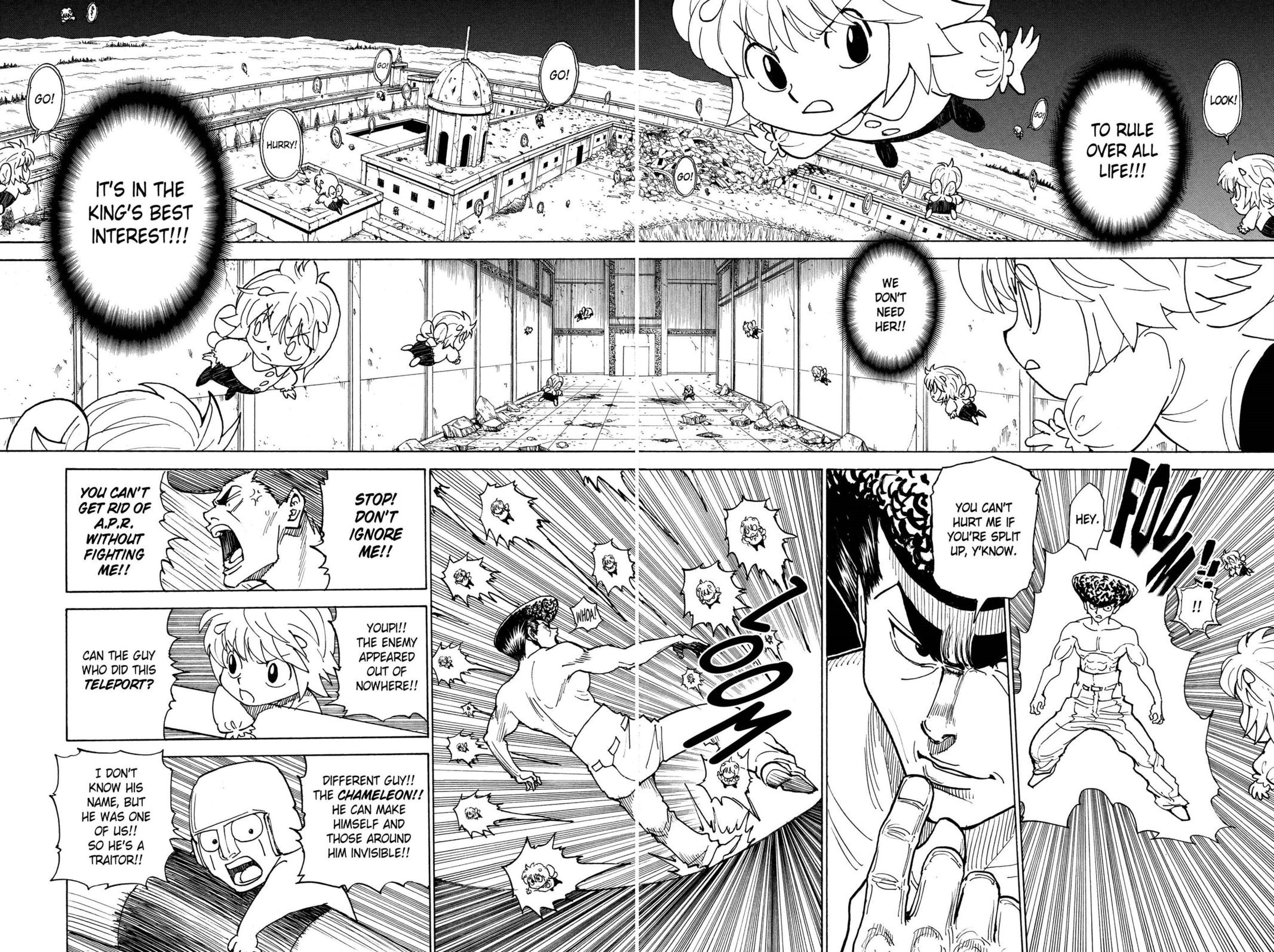

233
LOOOM
I SEE.
MY ABILITY WAS NEVER FOR ME!!
IT WAS ALL TO OFFER TO THE KING!!
YOUPI.
THIS DOES NOT MAKE SENSE.
URK...

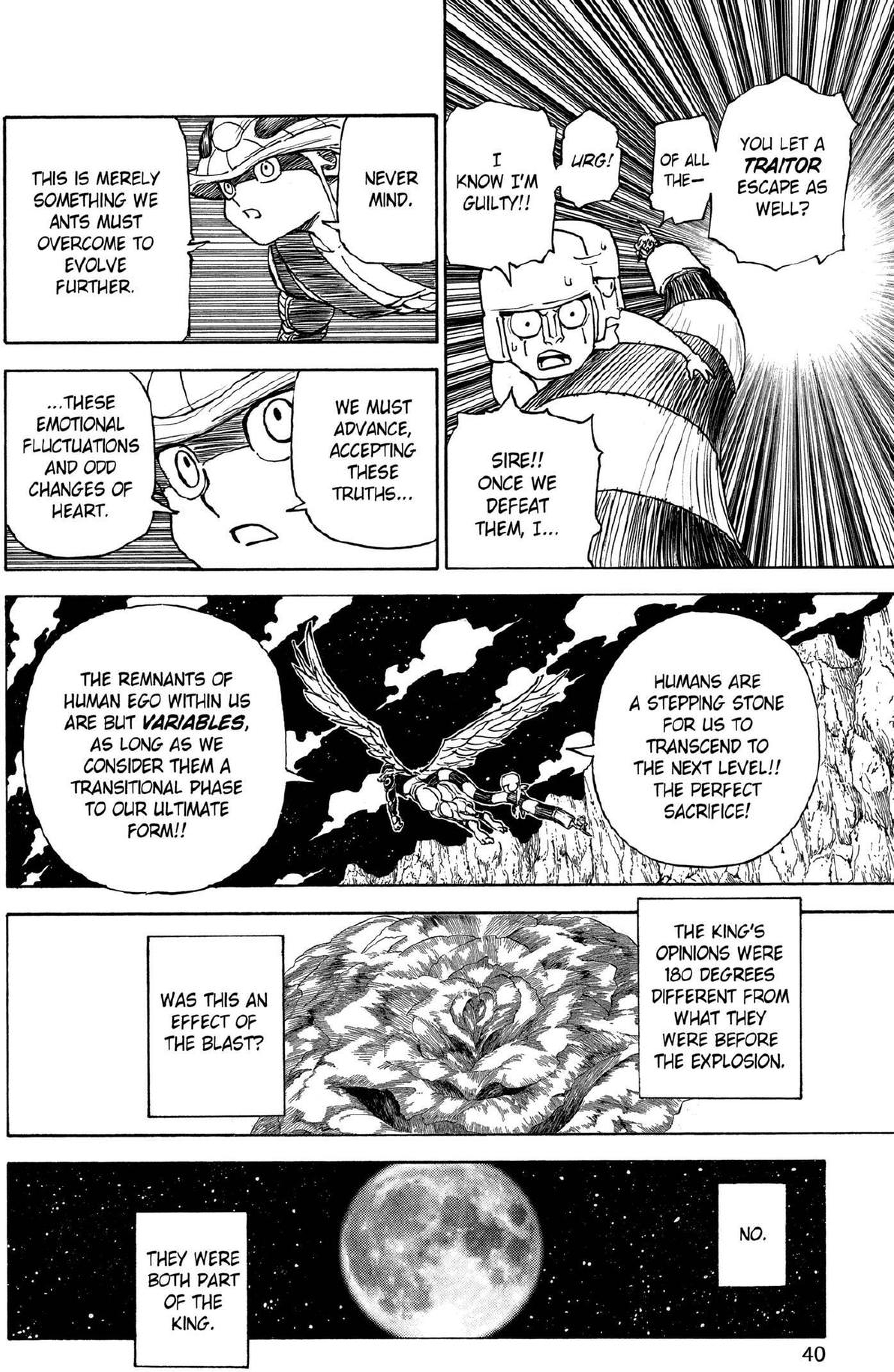

IF YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS ABILITY...
...EITHER YOU SAW IT...
...OR IT WAS USED AGAINST YOU.
WHICH IS IT?
...
I RECEIVED THE ATTACK.
IT IS NOT ON YOU NOW.
SO WHY IS THE ENEMY ALIVE?
HOW DID YOU DEACTIVATE THE ENEMY ABILITY?
ANSWER ME.
...
I AGREED TO THE CONDITION...
...THAT I WOULD LET HIS FRIEND LIVE... IF HE DEACTIVATED IT.

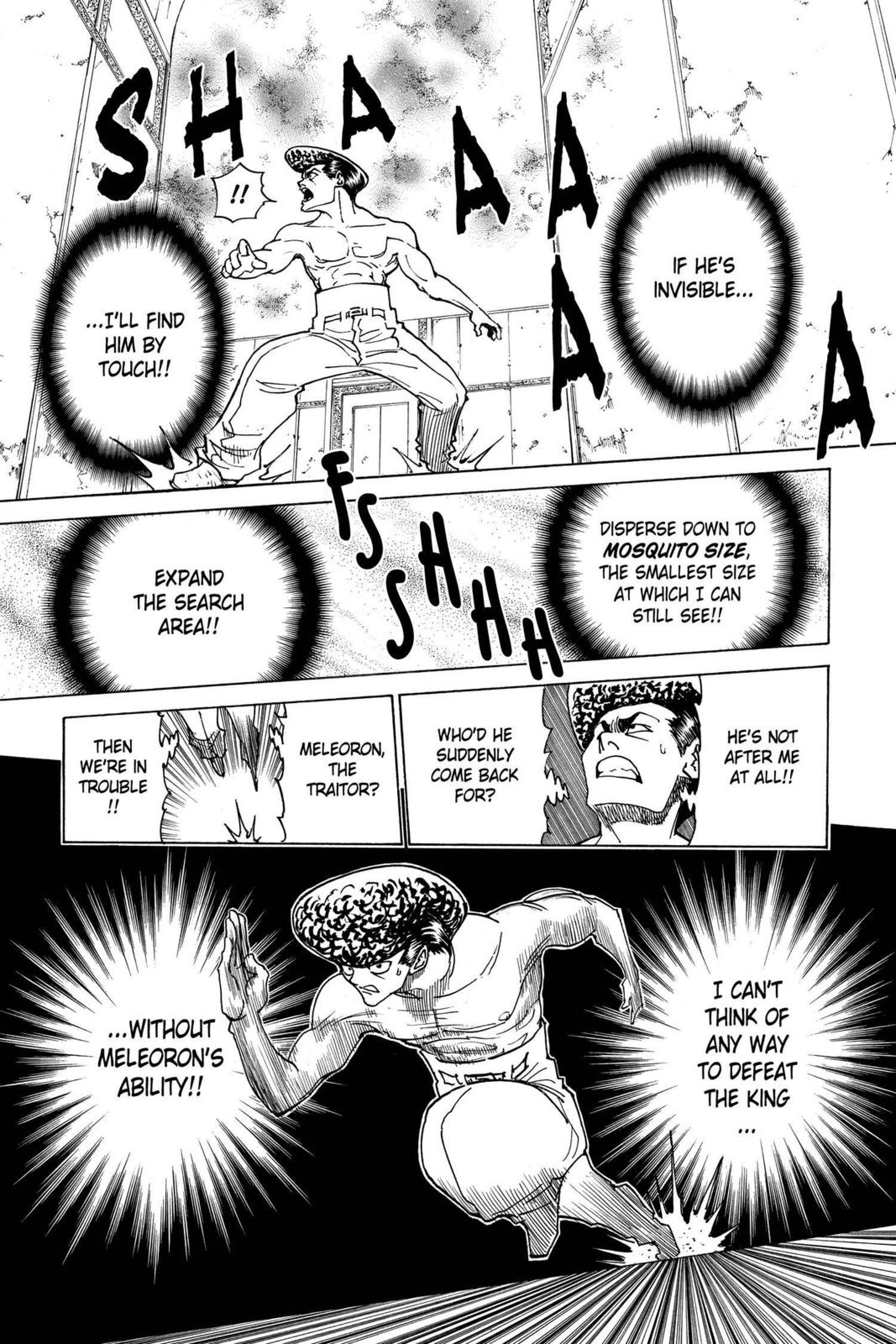

YOU COULD HAVE KILLED THEM BOTH AFTER HE DEACTIVATED IT.
WHY DIDN'T YOU?
...
I...
...HONESTLY DON'T KNOW.
I SUPPOSE... GOING BACK ON MY PROMISE...
...EVEN TO AN ENEMY... FELT LIKE *DEFEAT*, IN A WAY.
THAT'S *RIDICULOUS!!* YOU DELIBERATELY PASSED ON AN OPPORTUNITY...
...TO REMOVE THREATS TO THE KING, JUST BECAUSE OF SOME AMBIGUOUS *FEELING?*
I HAVE NO WORDS...
I'LL ACCEPT ANY PUNISHMENT.
I MERELY ORDERED YOU TO ANSWER ME WITHOUT DECEIT.
SP
THERE IS NO REASON TO BLAME YOU FOR ANSWERING TRUTHFULLY.

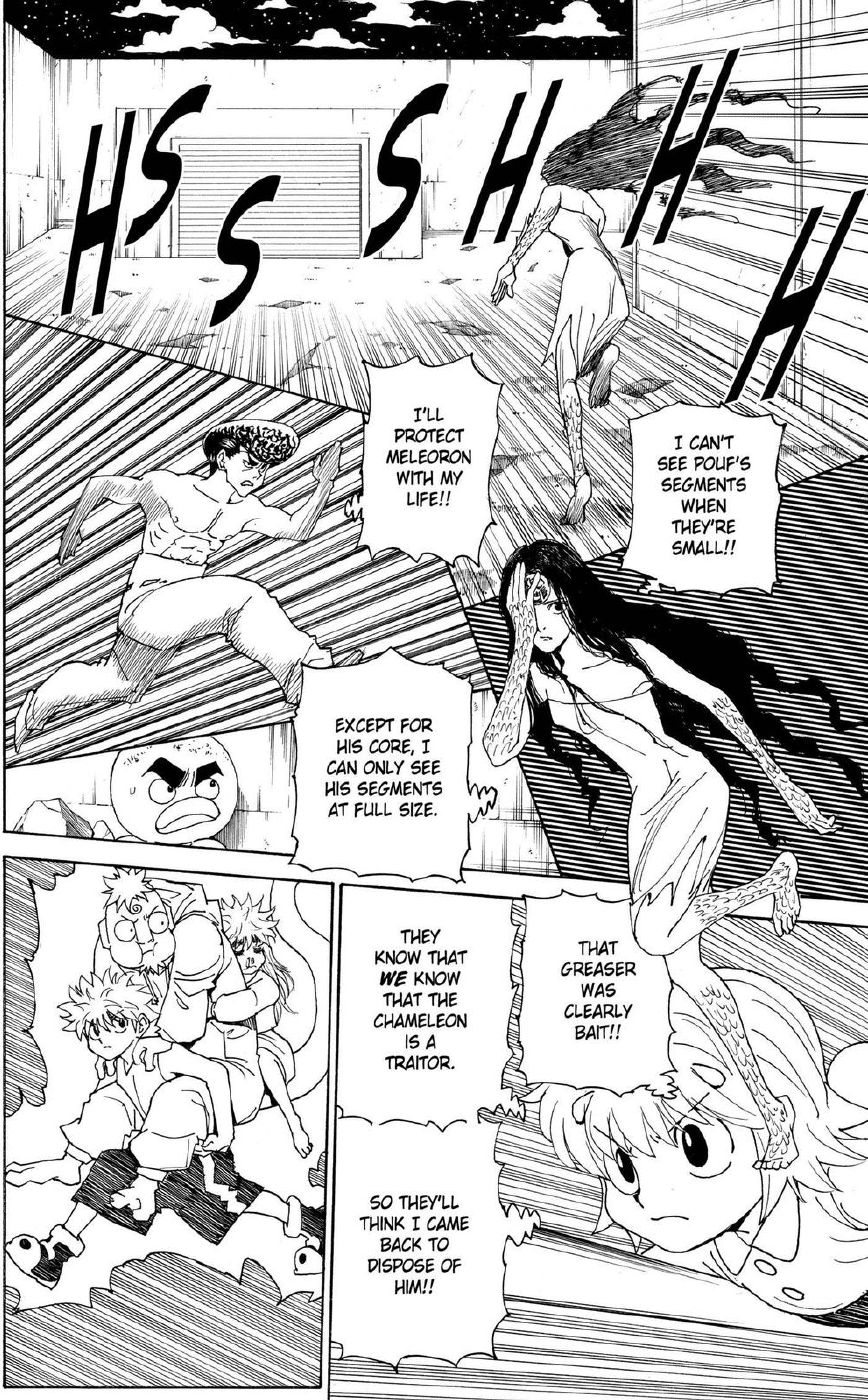

POUF.
SIR!
YOUPI.
SIR...
...
WE HAVE BECOME... COMPLEX.
WE ARE CONNECTED IN MIND AND BODY.
THERE CAN BE NO MORE SECRETS BETWEEN US!!
SIRE !!
...
SIRE... IS THIS YOUR FINAL WARNING? DO YOU SENSE MY GUILT...
...AS I PLOT BEHIND YOUR BACK?
...

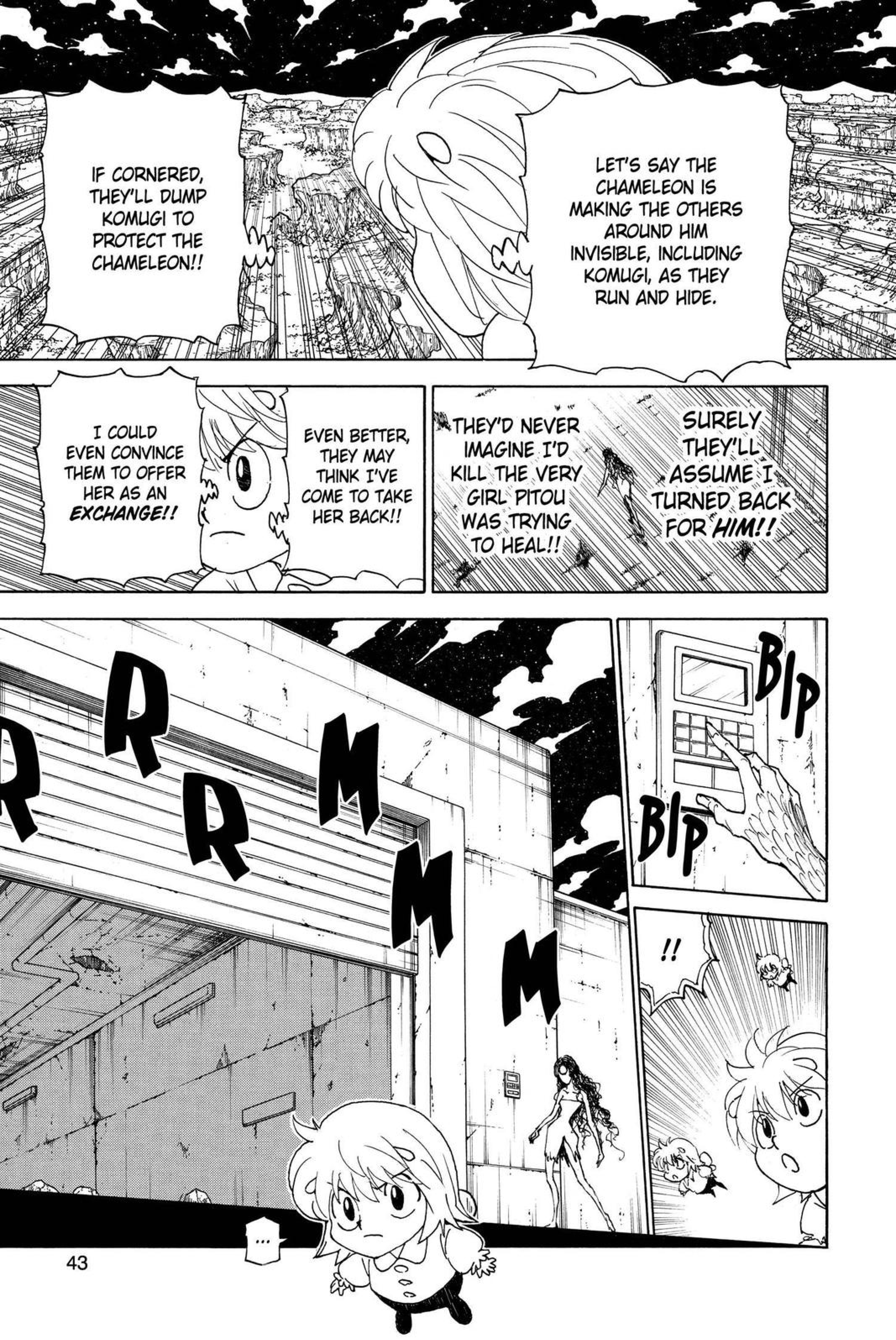

FASH
EVEN SO...
BUT I'LL DO IT!!!!
SHAAAA
EVEN IF IT IS DEEMED...
...A CAPITAL OFFENSE...
...THIS IS FOR THE KING!!

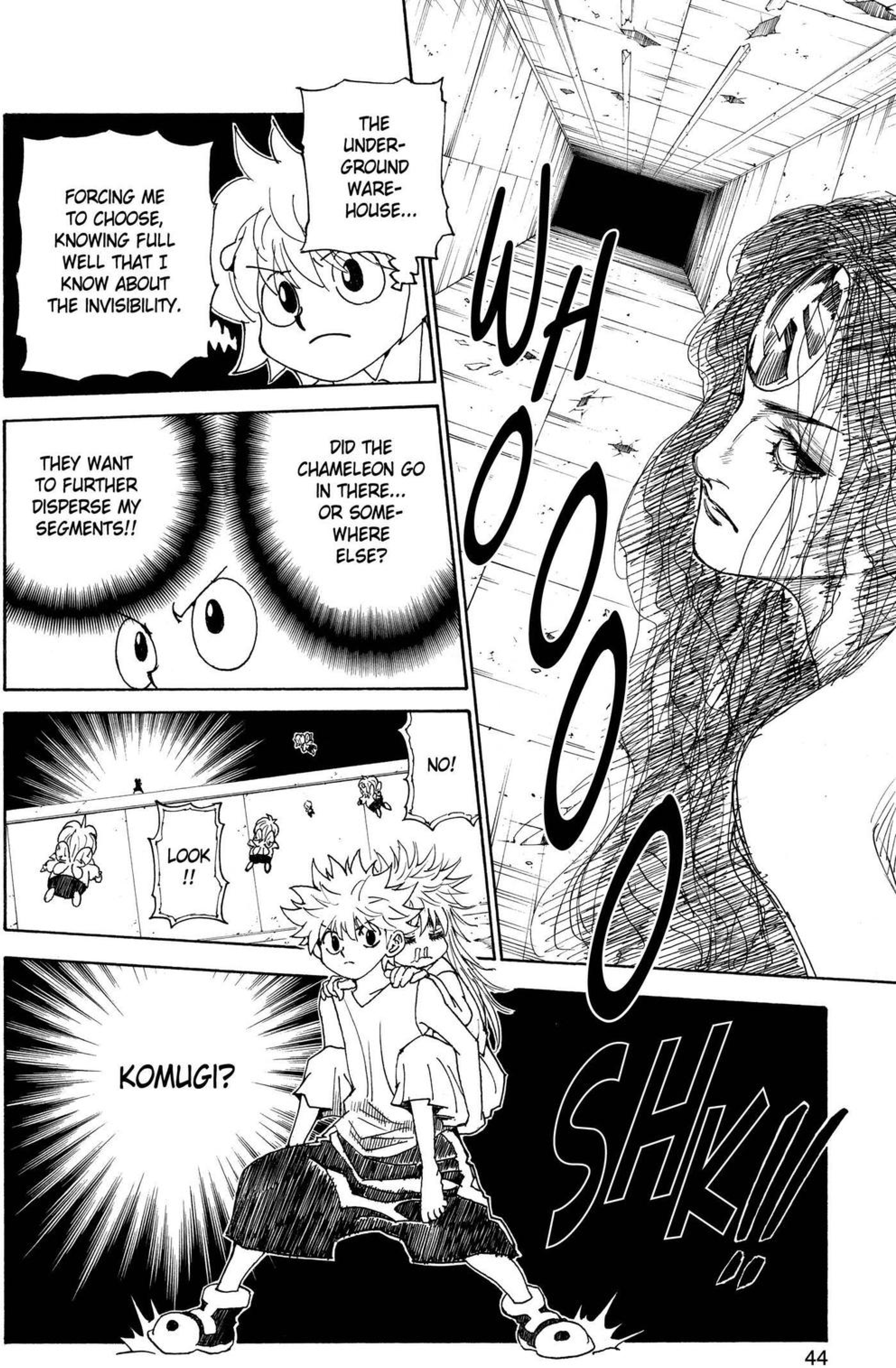

LOOK!
TO RULE OVER ALL LIFE!!!
GO!
GO!
GO!
GO!
HURRY!
GO!
IT'S IN THE KING'S BEST INTEREST!!!
WE DON'T NEED HER!!
HEY.
FOOM!!
!!
YOU CAN'T HURT ME IF YOU'RE SPLIT UP, Y'KNOW.
VOOM
WHOA!
STOP! DON'T IGNORE ME!!
YOU CAN'T GET RID OF A.P.R. WITHOUT FIGHTING ME!!
YOUPI!! THE ENEMY APPEARED OUT OF NOWHERE!!
CAN THE GUY WHO DID THIS *TELEPORT*?
DIFFERENT GUY!! THE *CHAMELEON!!* HE CAN MAKE HIMSELF AND THOSE AROUND HIM INVISIBLE!!
I DON'T KNOW HIS NAME, BUT HE WAS ONE OF US!! SO HE'S A TRAITOR!!

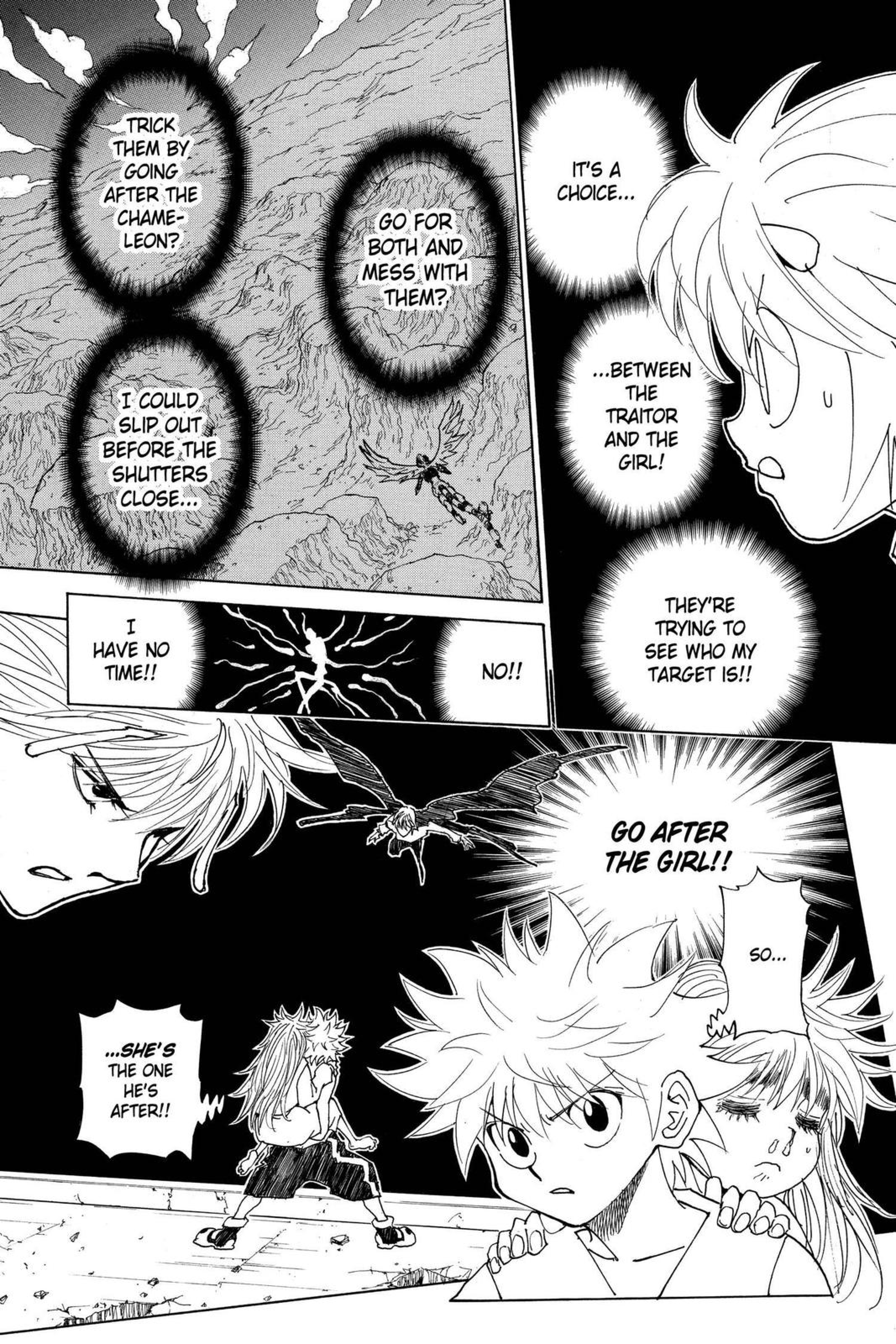

YOU LET A TRAITOR ESCAPE AS WELL?
OF ALL THE—
URG!
I KNOW I'M GUILTY!!
SIRE!! ONCE WE DEFEAT THEM, I...
NEVER MIND.
THIS IS MERELY SOMETHING WE ANTS MUST OVERCOME TO EVOLVE FURTHER.
WE MUST ADVANCE, ACCEPTING THESE TRUTHS...
...THESE EMOTIONAL FLUCTUATIONS AND ODD CHANGES OF HEART.
HUMANS ARE A STEPPING STONE FOR US TO TRANSCEND TO THE NEXT LEVEL!! THE PERFECT SACRIFICE!
THE REMNANTS OF HUMAN EGO WITHIN US ARE BUT VARIABLES, AS LONG AS WE CONSIDER THEM A TRANSITIONAL PHASE TO OUR ULTIMATE FORM!!
THE KING'S OPINIONS WERE 180 DEGREES DIFFERENT FROM WHAT THEY WERE BEFORE THE EXPLOSION.
WAS THIS AN EFFECT OF THE BLAST?
NO.
THEY WERE BOTH PART OF THE KING.

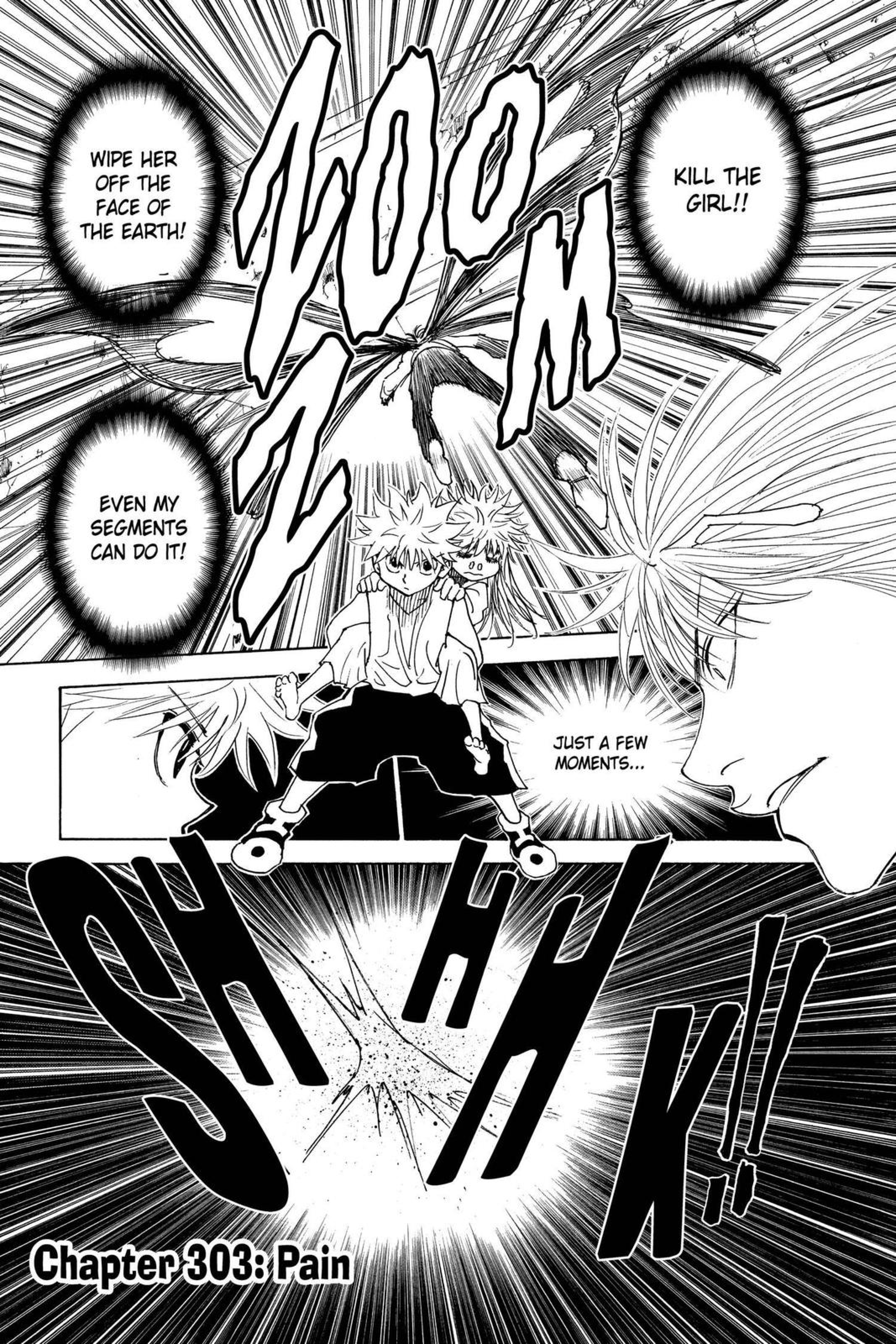

SHAAAAAA
!!
IF HE'S INVISIBLE...
...I'LL FIND HIM BY TOUCH!!
DISPERSE DOWN TO MOSQUITO SIZE, THE SMALLEST SIZE AT WHICH I CAN STILL SEE!!
FSHHH
EXPAND THE SEARCH AREA!!
HE'S NOT AFTER ME AT ALL!!
WHO'D HE SUDDENLY COME BACK FOR?
MELEORON, THE TRAITOR?
THEN WE'RE IN TROUBLE!!
I CAN'T THINK OF ANY WAY TO DEFEAT THE KING...
...WITHOUT MELEORON'S ABILITY!!


HSSSHHHH
I CAN'T SEE POUF'S SEGMENTS WHEN THEY'RE SMALL!!
I'LL PROTECT MELEORON WITH MY LIFE!!
EXCEPT FOR HIS CORE, I CAN ONLY SEE HIS SEGMENTS AT FULL SIZE.
THAT GREASER WAS CLEARLY BAIT!!
THEY KNOW THAT *WE* KNOW THAT THE CHAMELEON IS A TRAITOR.
SO THEY'LL THINK I CAME BACK TO DISPOSE OF HIM!!

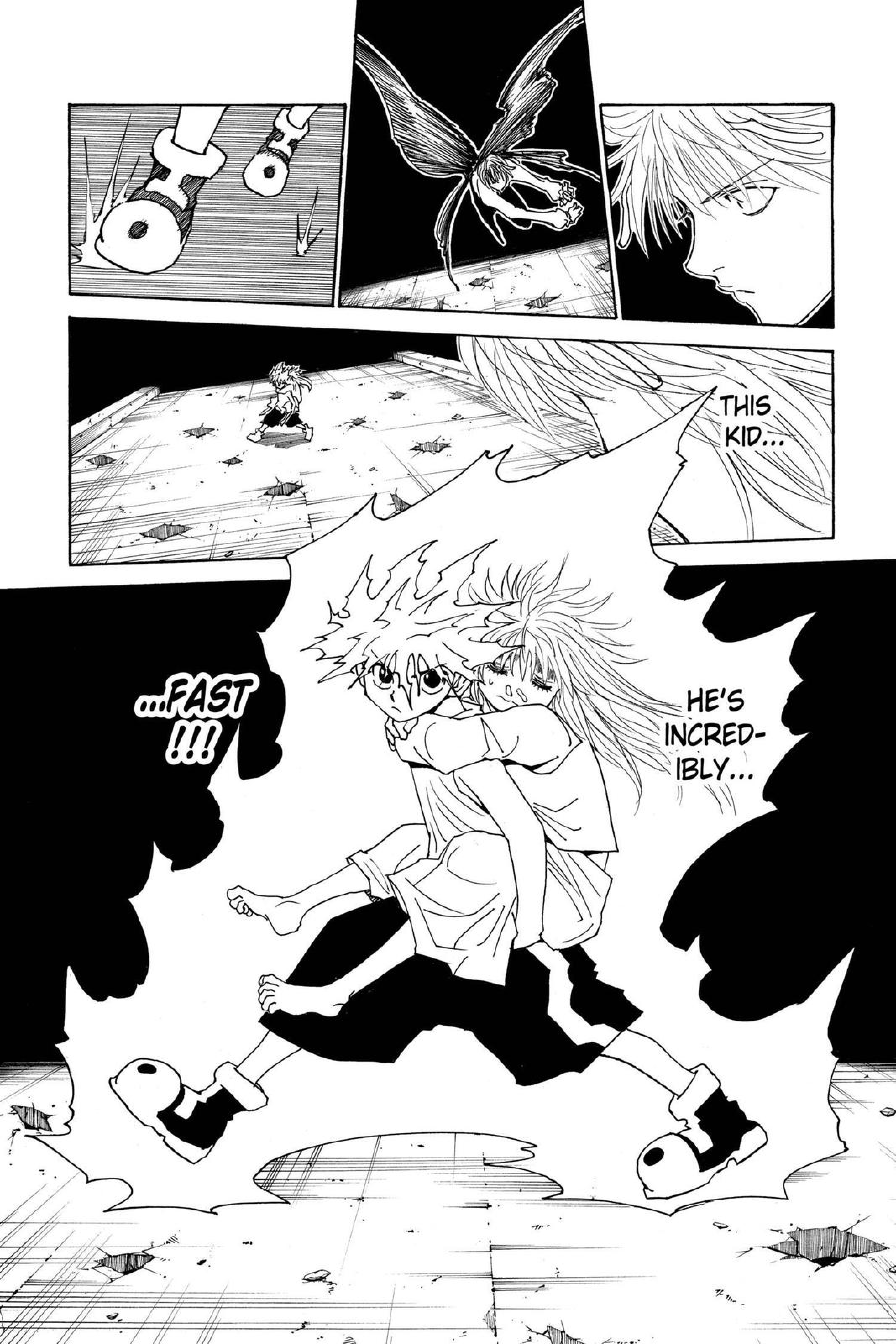

LET'S SAY THE CHAMELEON IS MAKING THE OTHERS AROUND HIM INVISIBLE, INCLUDING KOMUGI, AS THEY RUN AND HIDE.
IF CORNERED, THEY'LL DUMP KOMUGI TO PROTECT THE CHAMELEON!!
SURELY THEY'LL ASSUME I TURNED BACK FOR *HIM!!*
THEY'D NEVER IMAGINE I'D KILL THE VERY GIRL PITOU WAS TRYING TO HEAL!!
EVEN BETTER, THEY MAY THINK I'VE COME TO TAKE HER BACK!!
I COULD EVEN CONVINCE THEM TO OFFER HER AS AN ***EXCHANGE!!***
BIP
BIP
!!
RRRMMM
...

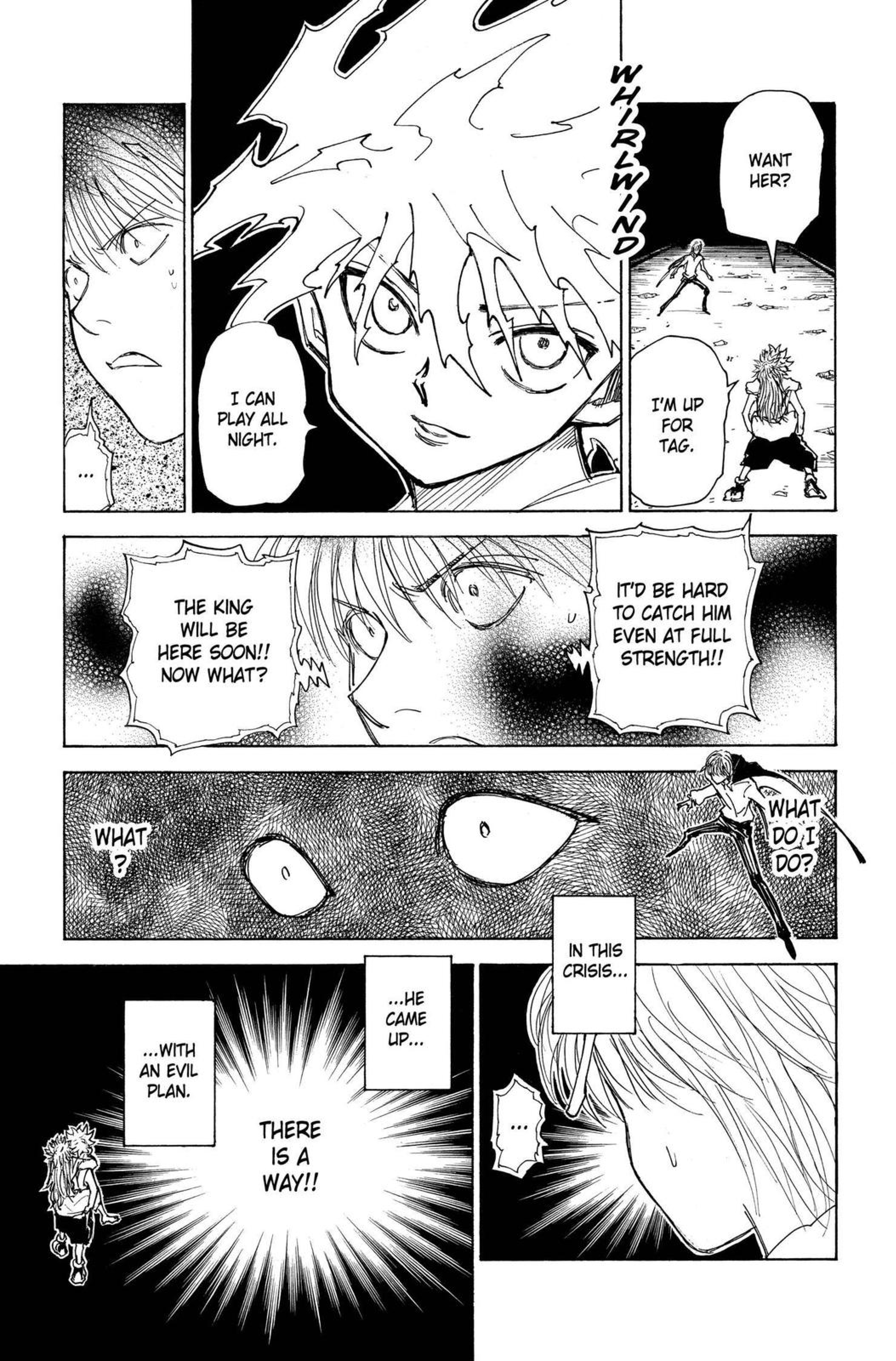

THE UNDERGROUND WAREHOUSE...
WHOOOOO
FORCING ME TO CHOOSE, KNOWING FULL WELL THAT I KNOW ABOUT THE INVISIBILITY.
DID THE CHAMELEON GO IN THERE... OR SOMEWHERE ELSE?
THEY WANT TO FURTHER DISPERSE MY SEGMENTS!!
NO!
LOOK!!
KOMUGI?
SHK!!

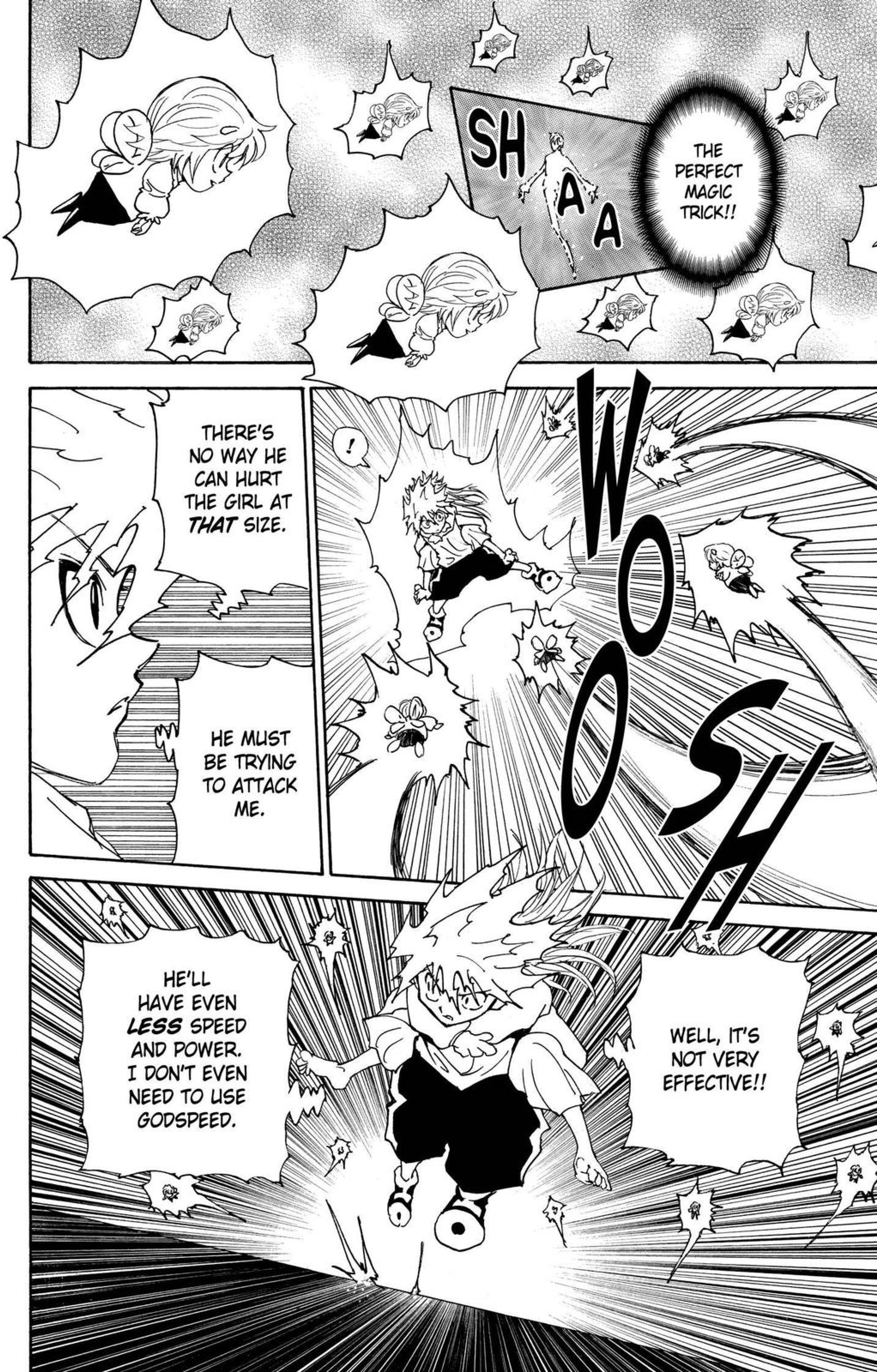

IT'S A CHOICE...
...BETWEEN THE TRAITOR AND THE GIRL!
THEY'RE TRYING TO SEE WHO MY TARGET IS!!
GO FOR BOTH AND MESS WITH THEM?
TRICK THEM BY GOING AFTER THE CHAMELEON?
I COULD SLIP OUT BEFORE THE SHUTTERS CLOSE...
NO!!
I HAVE NO TIME!!
GO AFTER THE GIRL!!
SO...
...SHE'S THE ONE HE'S AFTER!!

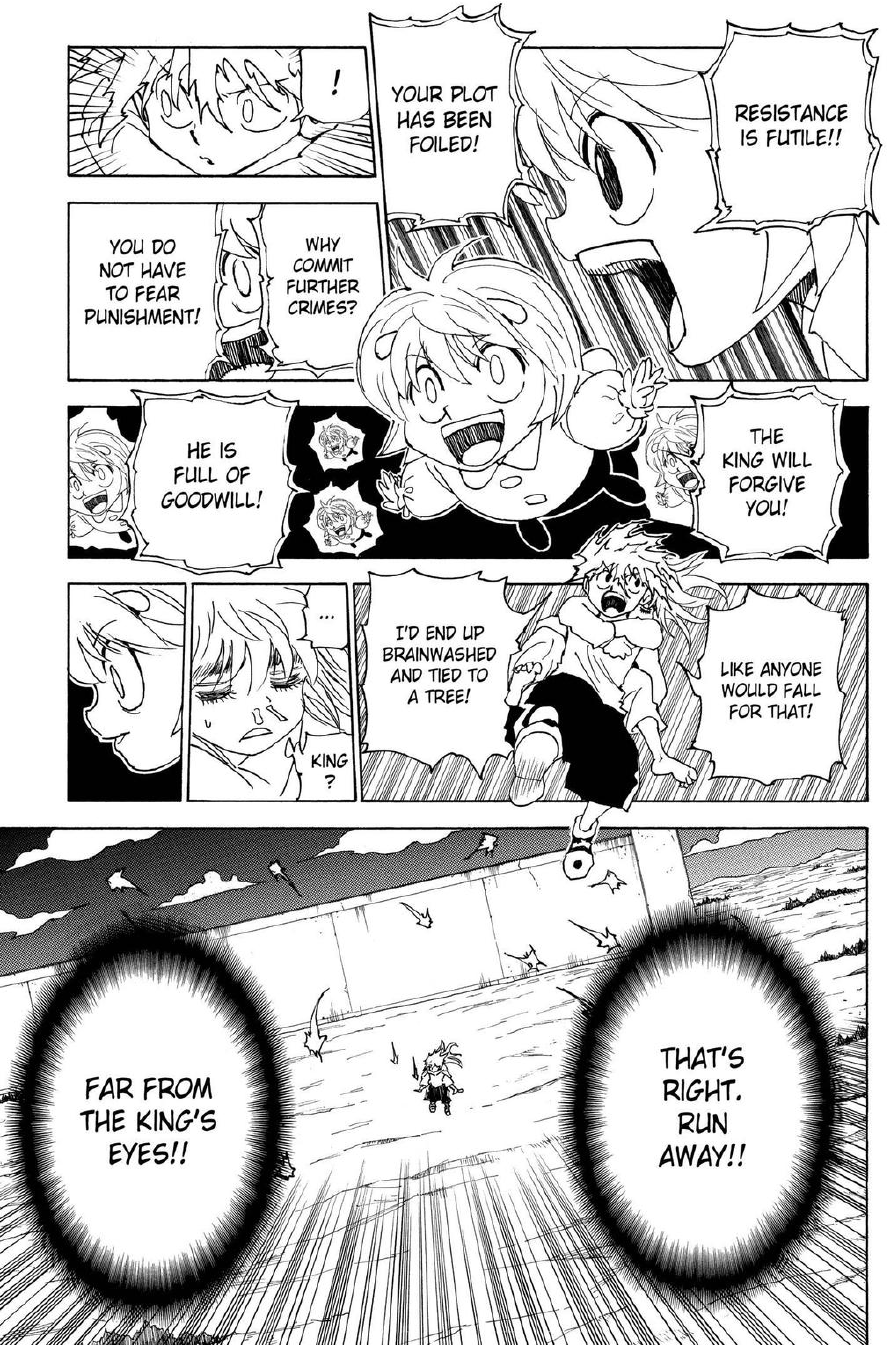

KILL THE GIRL!!
ZOOOM
WIPE HER OFF THE FACE OF THE EARTH!
EVEN MY SEGMENTS CAN DO IT!
JUST A FEW MOMENTS...
SHHHK!!

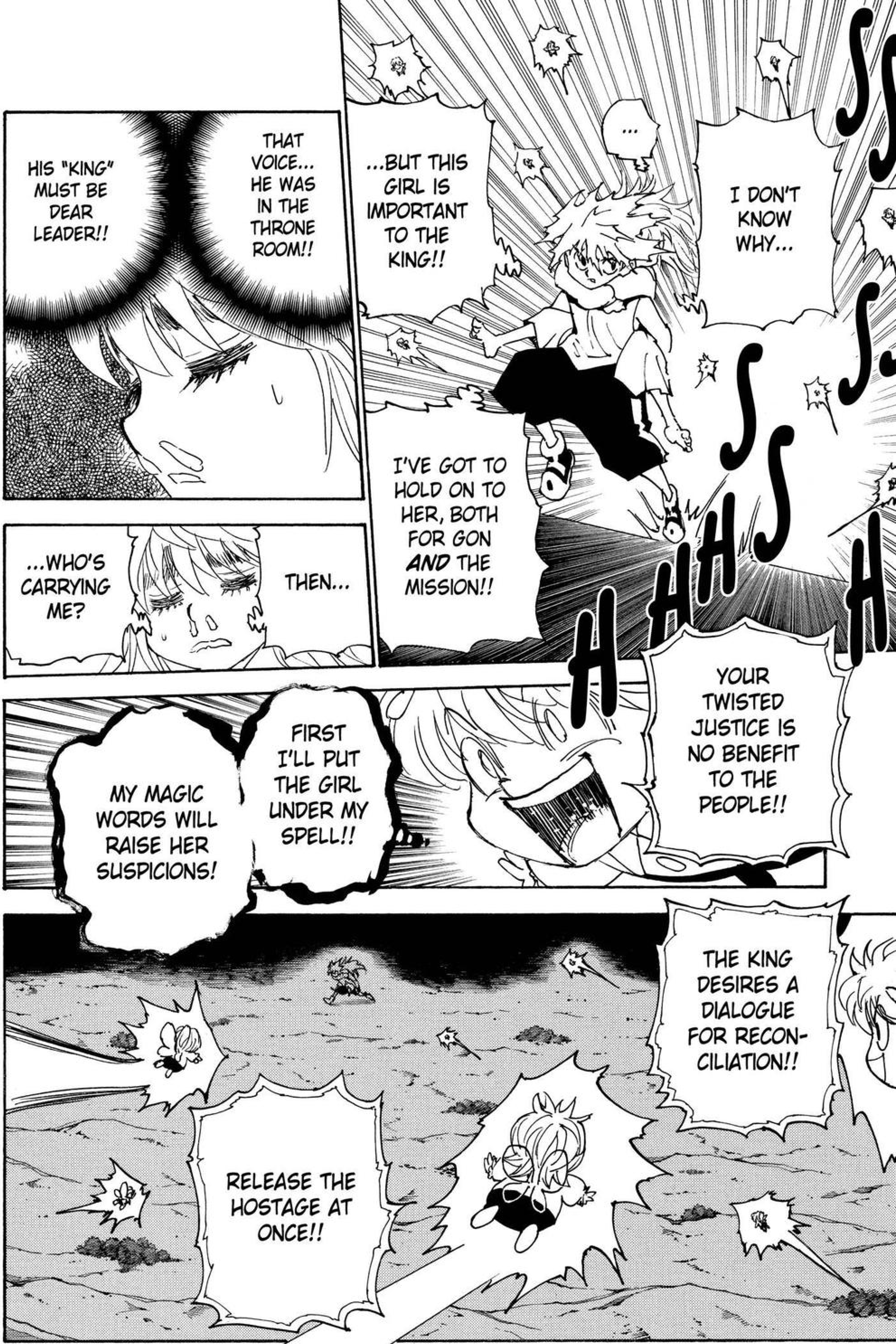
Chapter 303: Pain

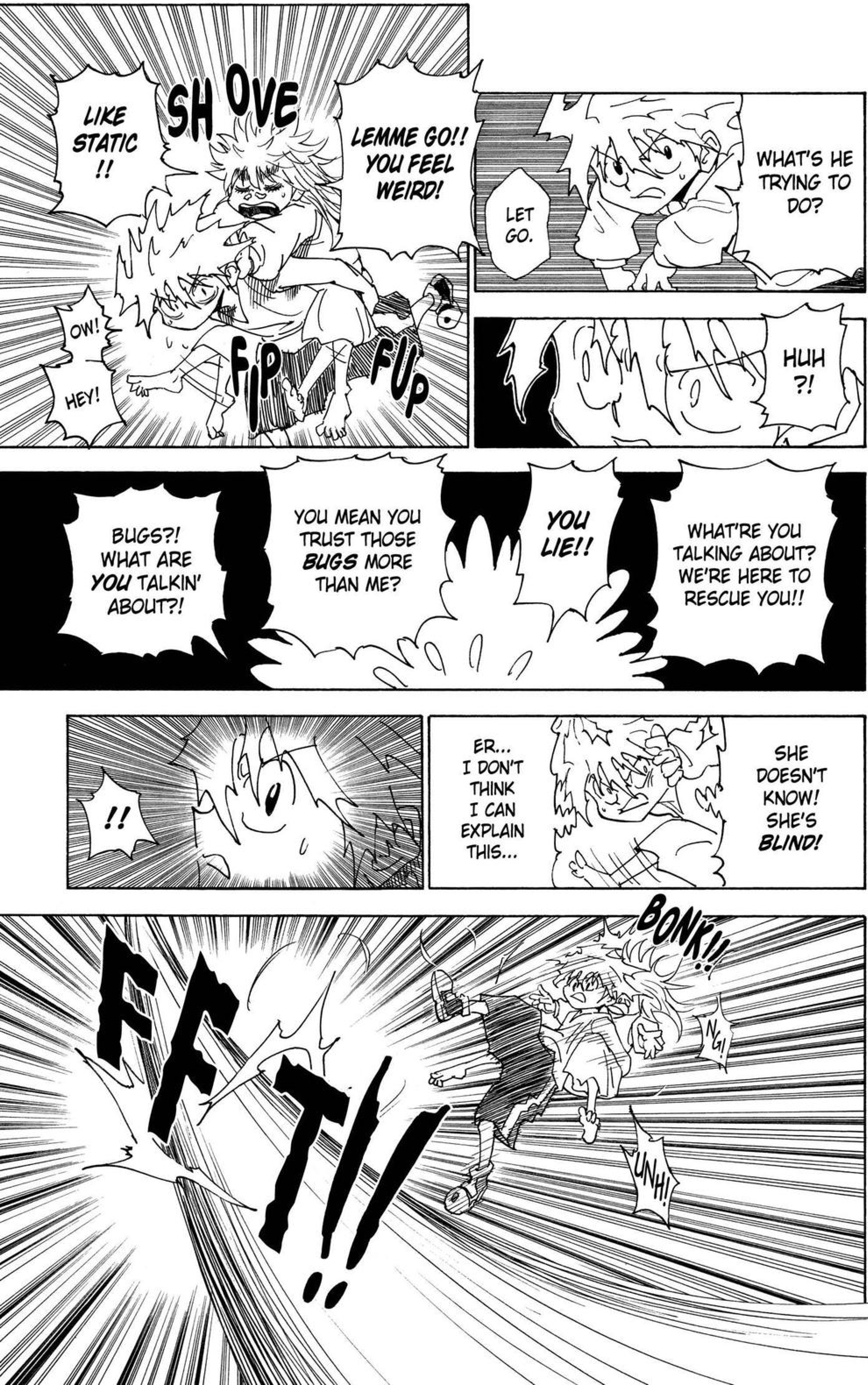

THIS KID...
HE'S INCREDIBLY...
...FAST!!!

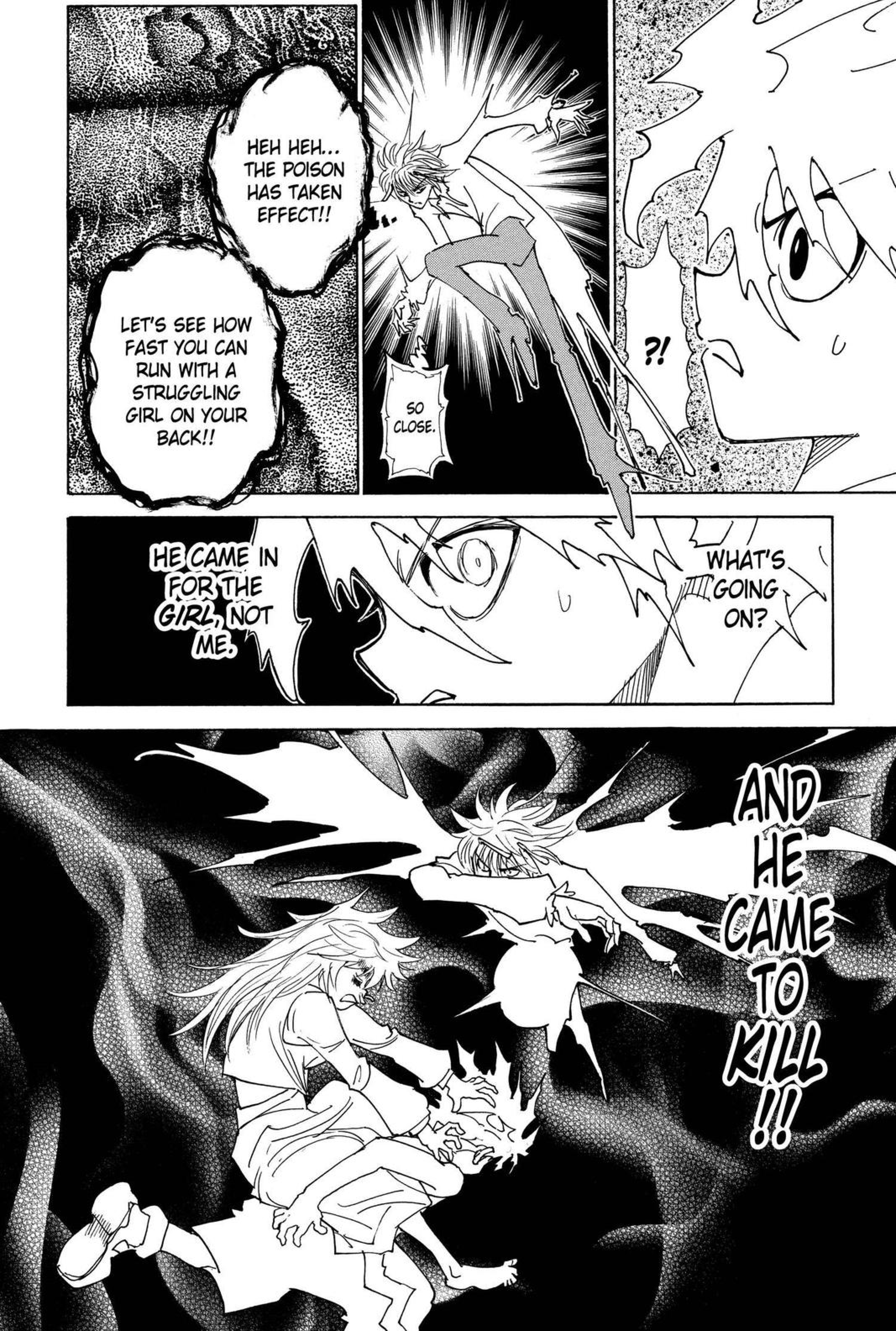

WANT HER?
I'M UP FOR TAG.
WHIRLWIND
I CAN PLAY ALL NIGHT.
...
IT'D BE HARD TO CATCH HIM EVEN AT FULL STRENGTH!!
THE KING WILL BE HERE SOON!! NOW WHAT?
WHAT DO I DO?
WHAT?
IN THIS CRISIS...
...
...HE CAME UP...
...WITH AN EVIL PLAN.
THERE IS A WAY!!

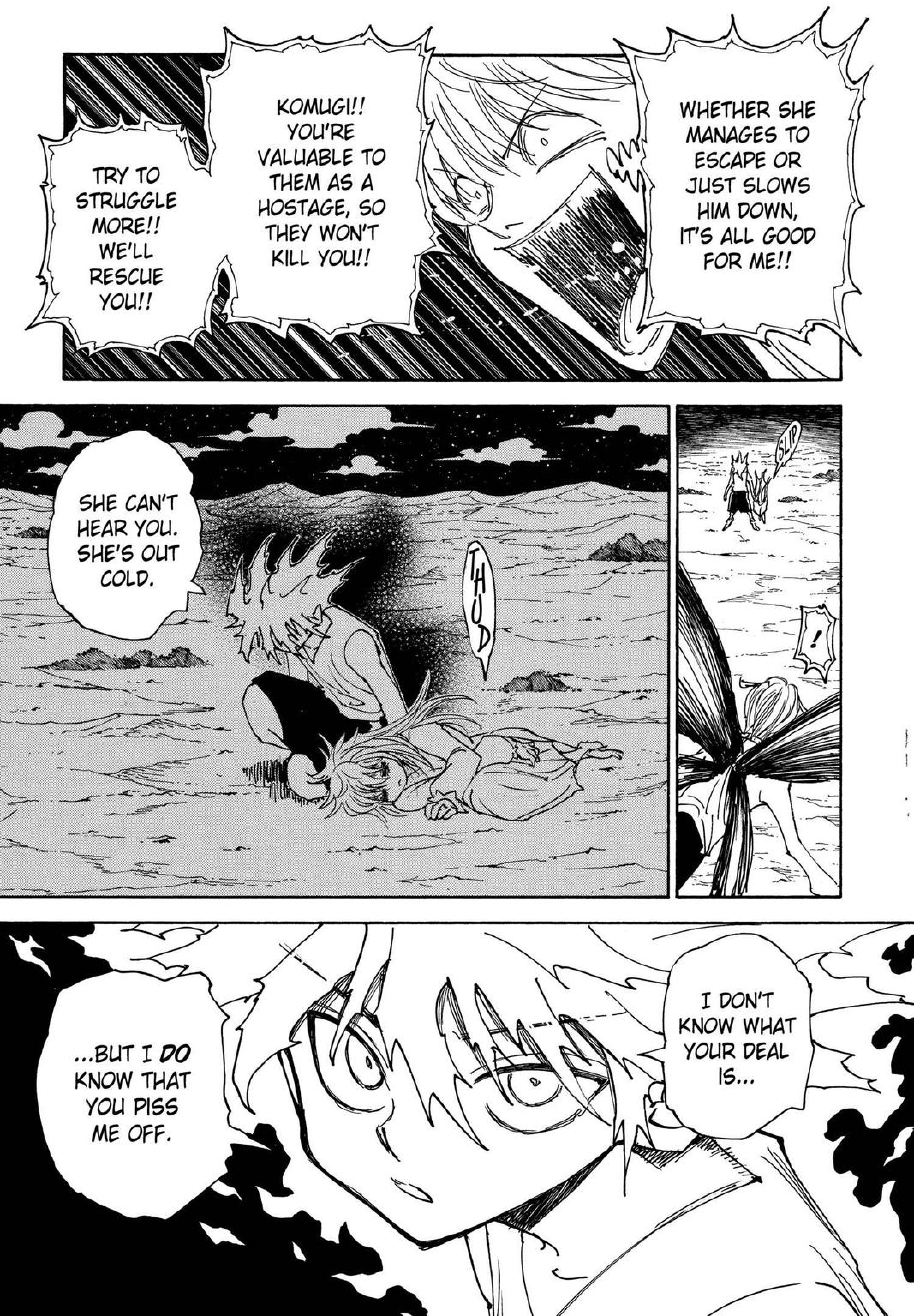

SHAA
THE PERFECT MAGIC TRICK!!
!
WOOSH
THERE'S NO WAY HE CAN HURT THE GIRL AT *THAT* SIZE.
HE MUST BE TRYING TO ATTACK ME.
WELL, IT'S NOT VERY EFFECTIVE!!
HE'LL HAVE EVEN *LESS* SPEED AND POWER. I DON'T EVEN NEED TO USE GODSPEED.

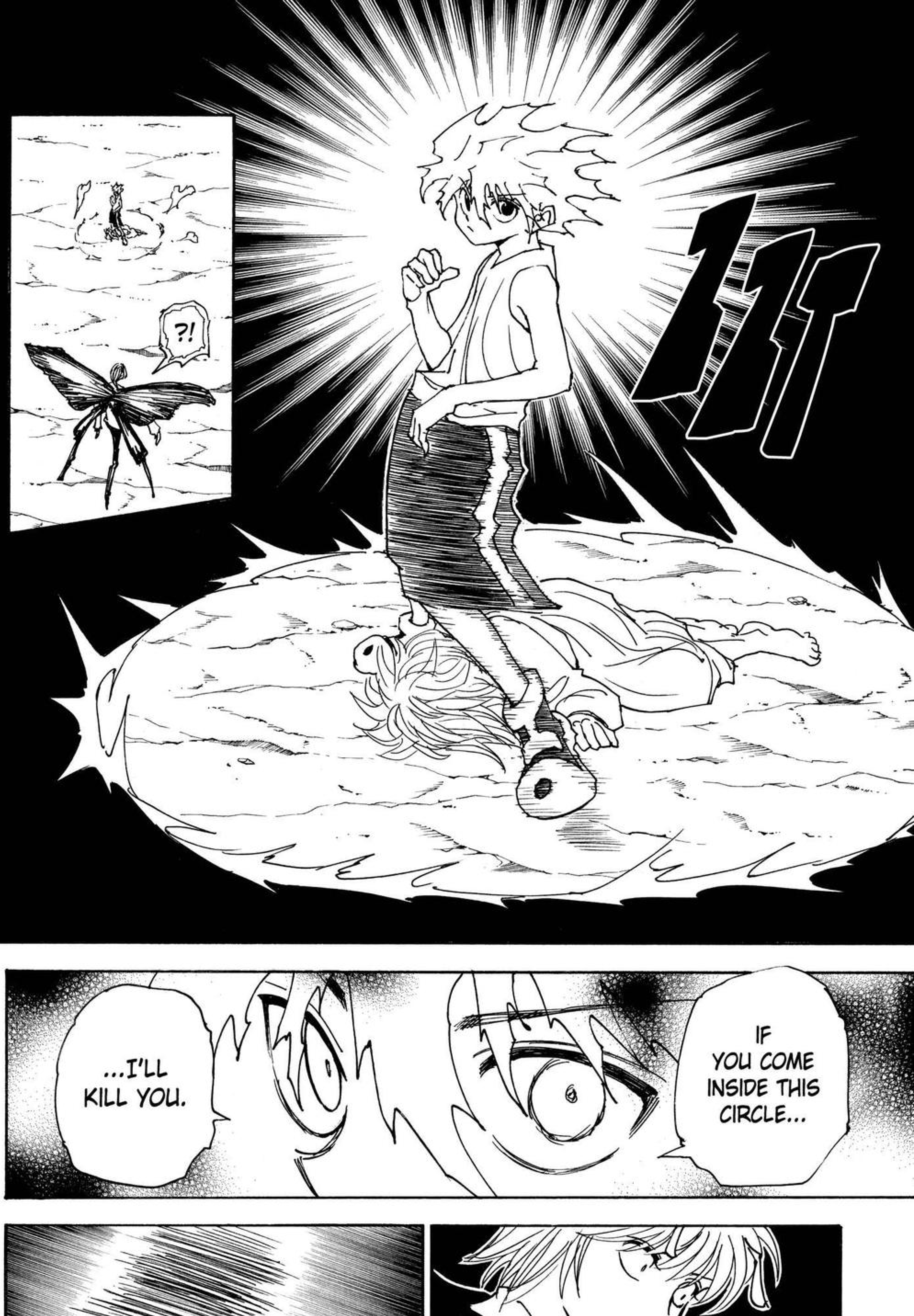

YOUR PLOT HAS BEEN FOILED!
RESISTANCE IS FUTILE!!
!
WHY COMMIT FURTHER CRIMES?
YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FEAR PUNISHMENT!
THE KING WILL FORGIVE YOU!
HE IS FULL OF GOODWILL!
LIKE ANYONE WOULD FALL FOR THAT!
I'D END UP BRAINWASHED AND TIED TO A TREE!
...
KING ?
THAT'S RIGHT. RUN AWAY!!
FAR FROM THE KING'S EYES!!

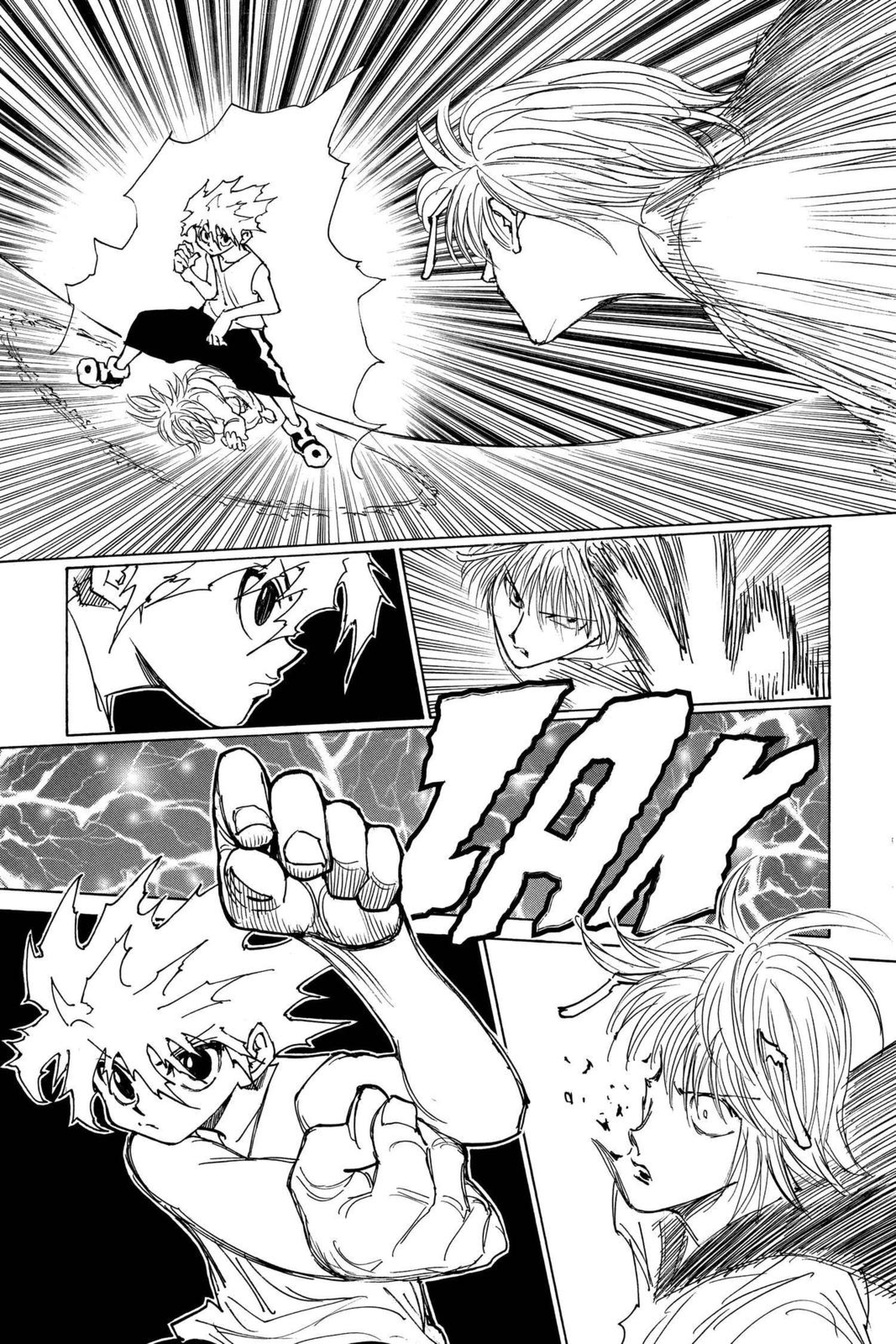

...
I DON'T KNOW WHY...
...BUT THIS GIRL IS IMPORTANT TO THE KING!!
I'VE GOT TO HOLD ON TO HER, BOTH FOR GON **AND** THE MISSION!!
SHHH
THAT VOICE... HE WAS IN THE THRONE ROOM!!
HIS "KING" MUST BE DEAR LEADER!!
THEN...
...WHO'S CARRYING ME?
YOUR TWISTED JUSTICE IS NO BENEFIT TO THE PEOPLE!!
FIRST I'LL PUT THE GIRL UNDER MY SPELL!!
MY MAGIC WORDS WILL RAISE HER SUSPICIONS!
THE KING DESIRES A DIALOGUE FOR RECONCILIATION!!
RELEASE THE HOSTAGE AT ONCE!!

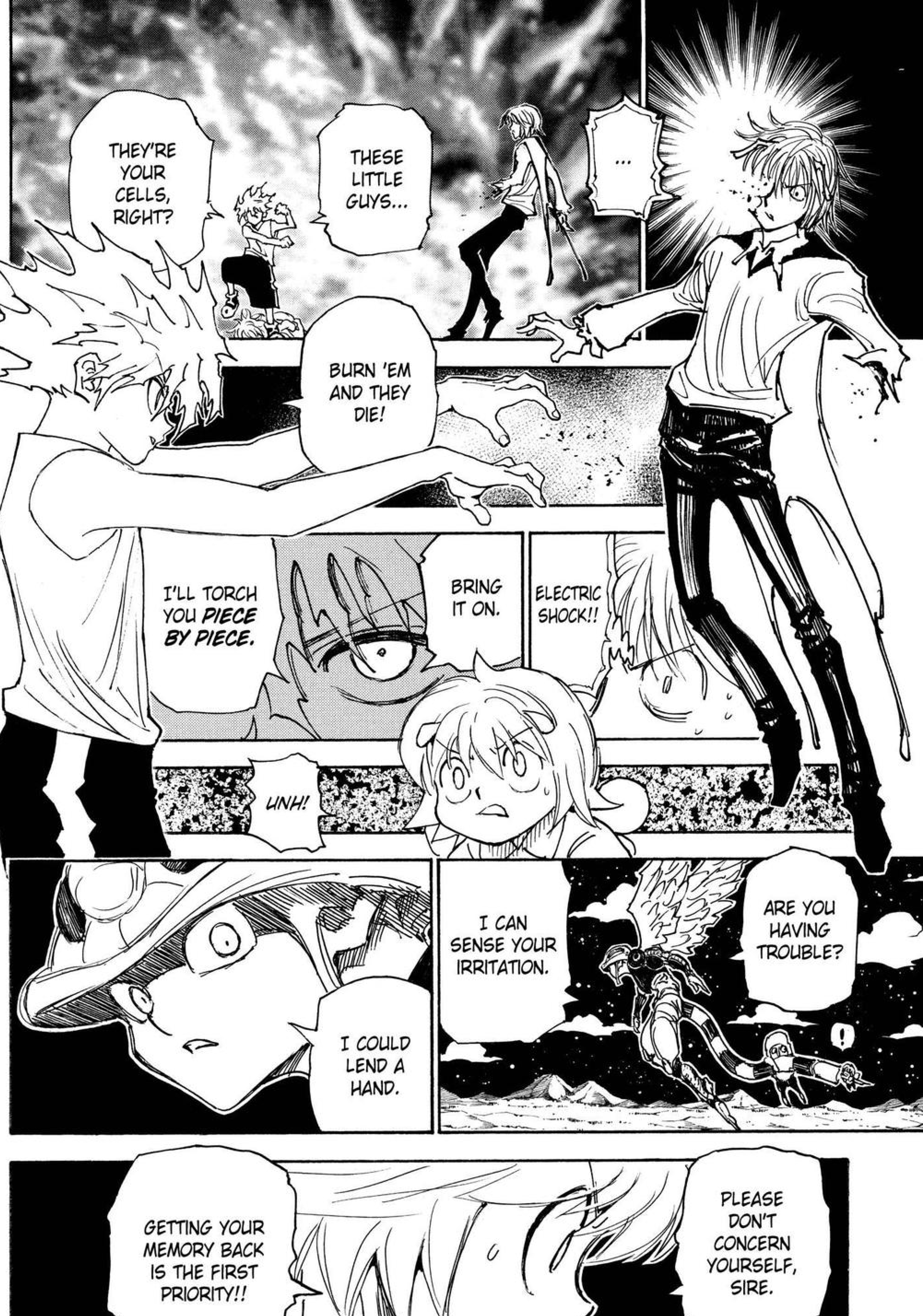

WHAT'S HE TRYING TO DO?
LET GO.
HUH ?!
LEMME GO!! YOU FEEL WEIRD!
SHOVE
LIKE STATIC !!
FIP
FUP
OW!
HEY!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE'RE HERE TO RESCUE YOU!!
YOU LIE!!
YOU MEAN YOU TRUST THOSE BUGS MORE THAN ME?
BUGS?! WHAT ARE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT?!
SHE DOESN'T KNOW! SHE'S BLIND!
ER... I DON'T THINK I CAN EXPLAIN THIS...
!!
BONK!!
NG!
UNH!
FFT!!

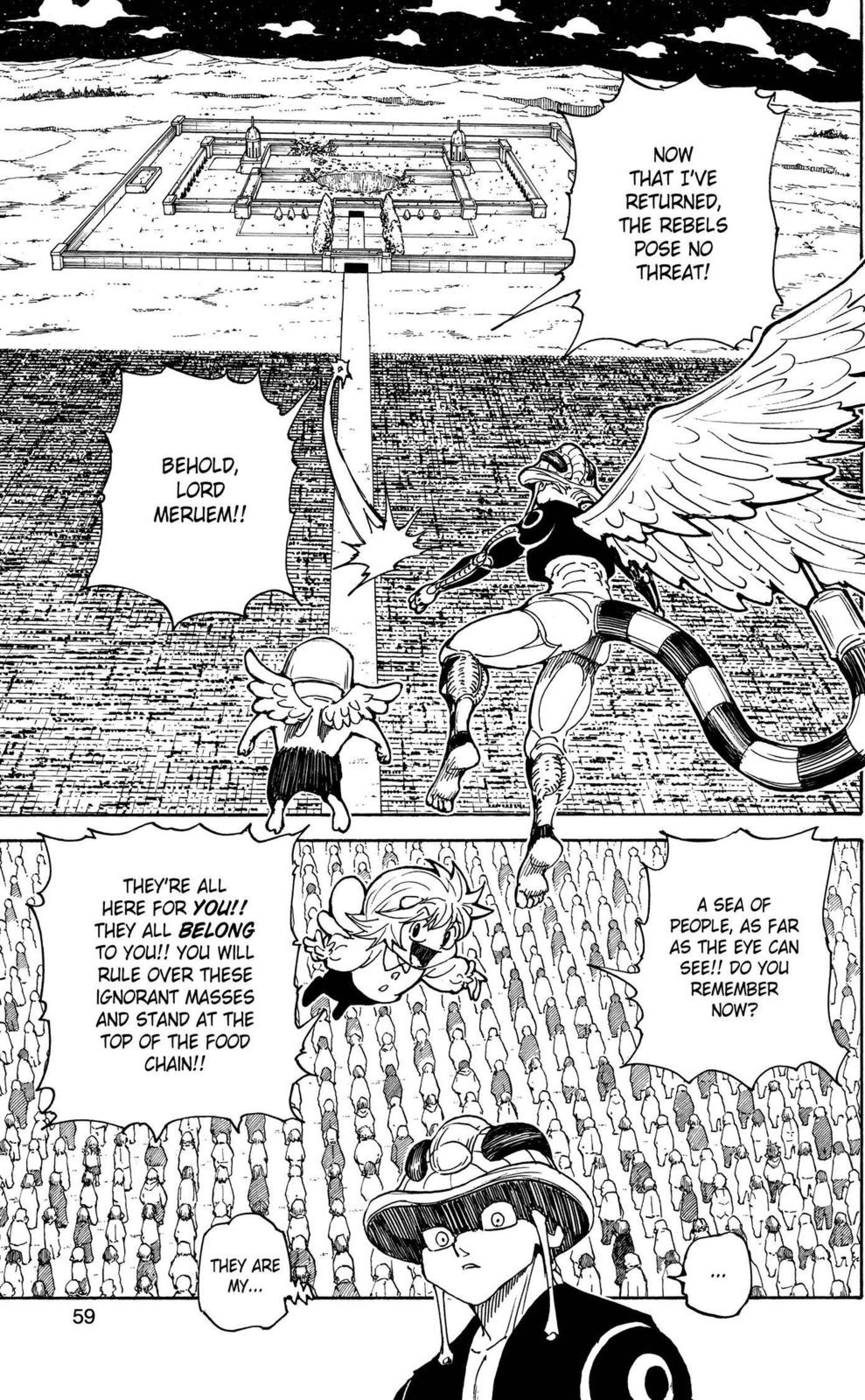

?!
SO CLOSE.
HEH HEH... THE POISON HAS TAKEN EFFECT!!
LET'S SEE HOW FAST YOU CAN RUN WITH A STRUGGLING GIRL ON YOUR BACK!!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
HE CAME IN FOR THE GIRL, NOT ME.
AND HE CAME TO KILL!!

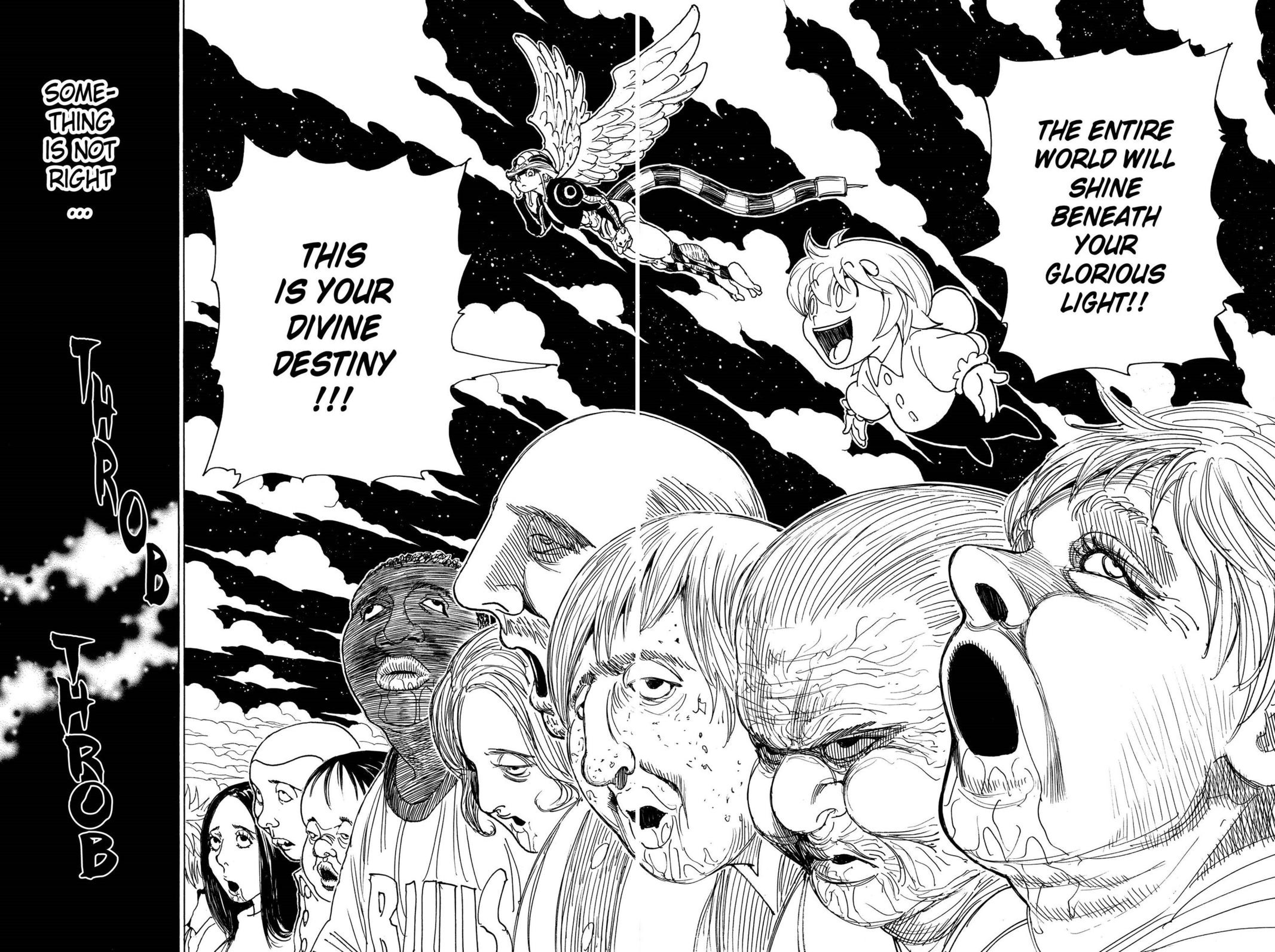

WHETHER SHE MANAGES TO ESCAPE OR JUST SLOWS HIM DOWN, IT'S ALL GOOD FOR ME!!
KOMUGI!! YOU'RE VALUABLE TO THEM AS A HOSTAGE, SO THEY WON'T KILL YOU!!
TRY TO STRUGGLE MORE!! WE'LL RESCUE YOU!!
SLIP
!
THUD
SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU. SHE'S OUT COLD.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOUR DEAL IS...
...BUT I **DO** KNOW THAT YOU PISS ME OFF.

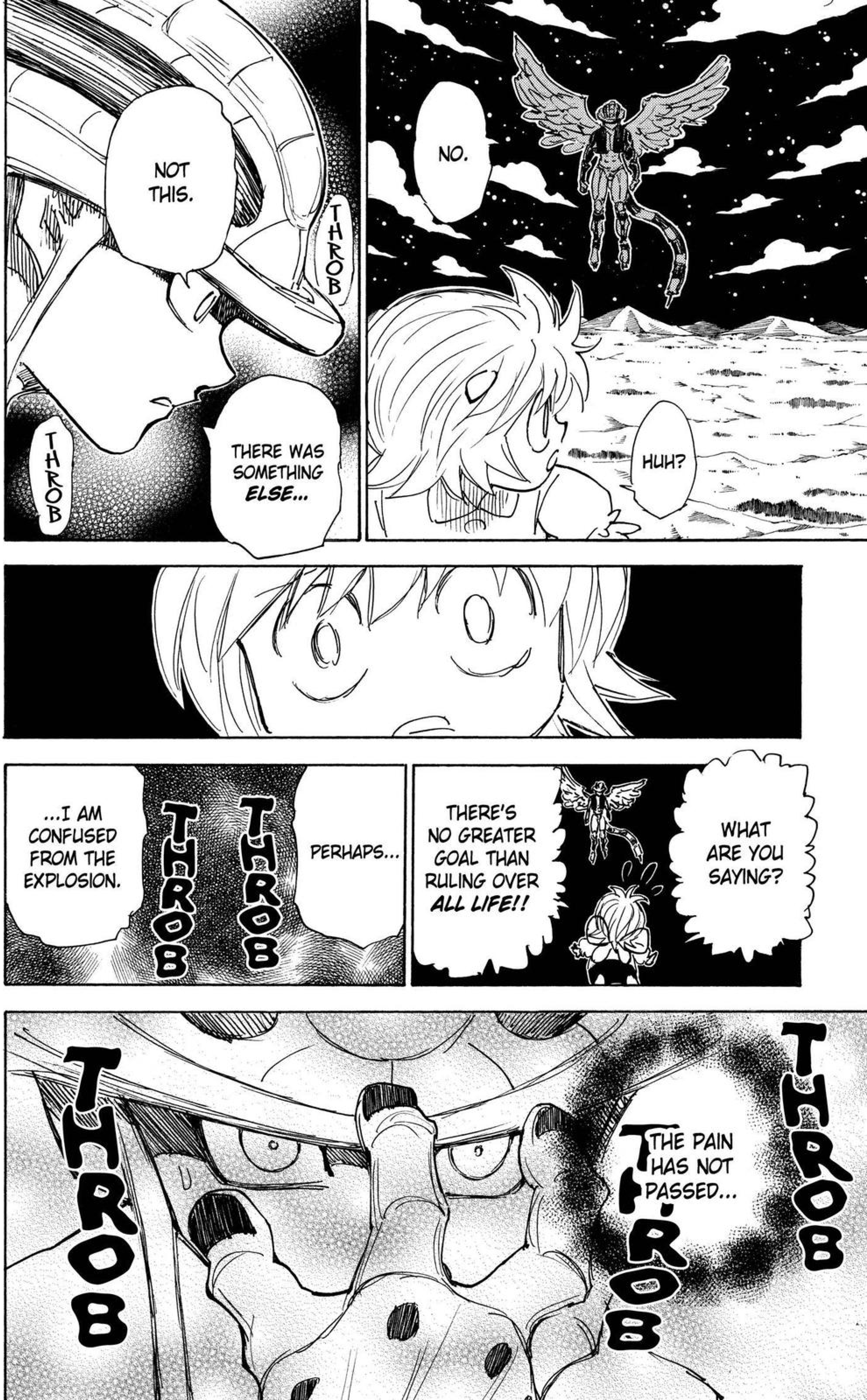

?!
IF YOU COME INSIDE THIS CIRCLE...
...I'LL KILL YOU.


TAK

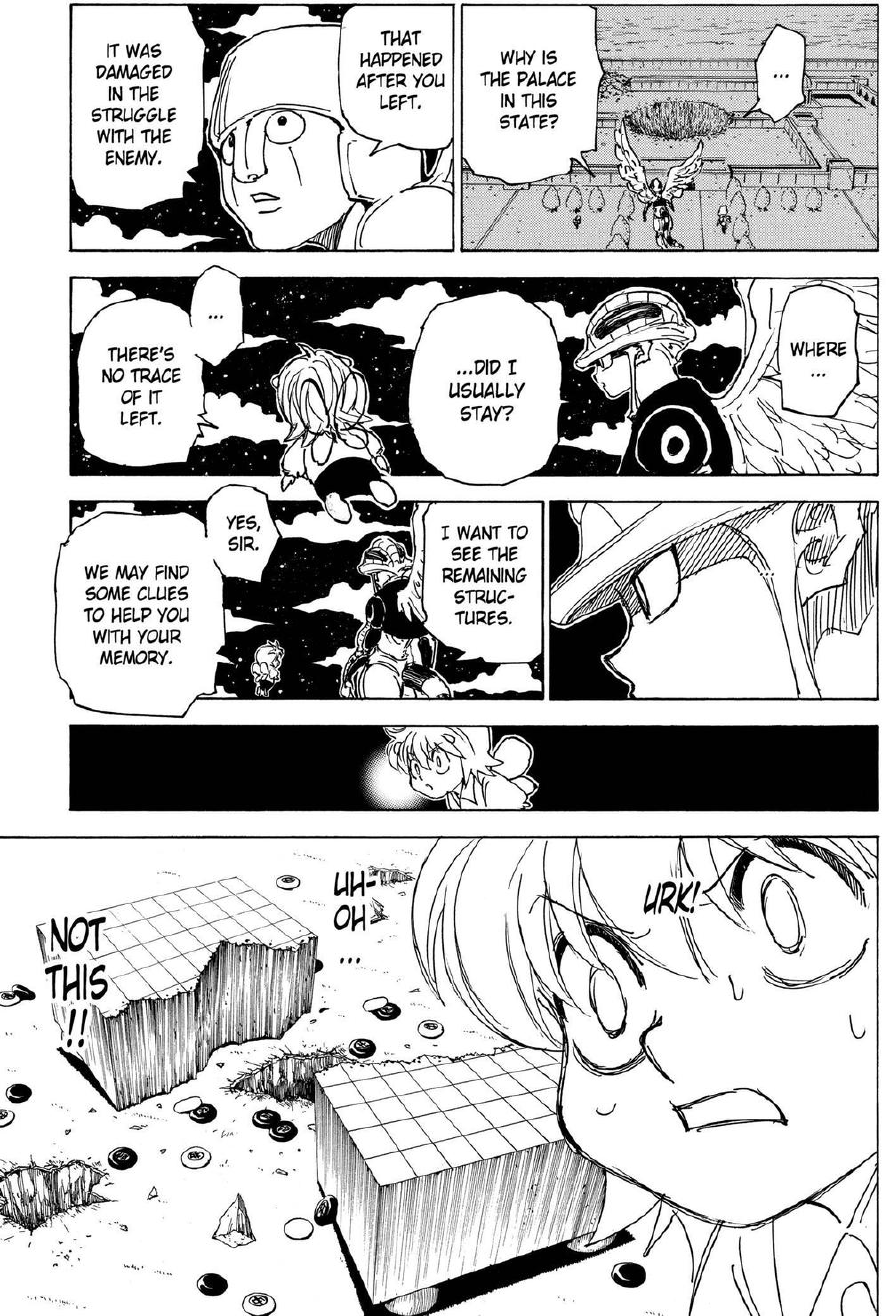

...
THESE LITTLE GUYS...
THEY'RE YOUR CELLS, RIGHT?
BURN 'EM AND THEY DIE!
ELECTRIC SHOCK!!
BRING IT ON.
I'LL TORCH YOU *PIECE BY PIECE.*
UNH!
ARE YOU HAVING TROUBLE?
!
I CAN SENSE YOUR IRRITATION.
I COULD LEND A HAND.
PLEASE DON'T CONCERN YOURSELF, SIRE.
GETTING YOUR MEMORY BACK IS THE FIRST PRIORITY!!

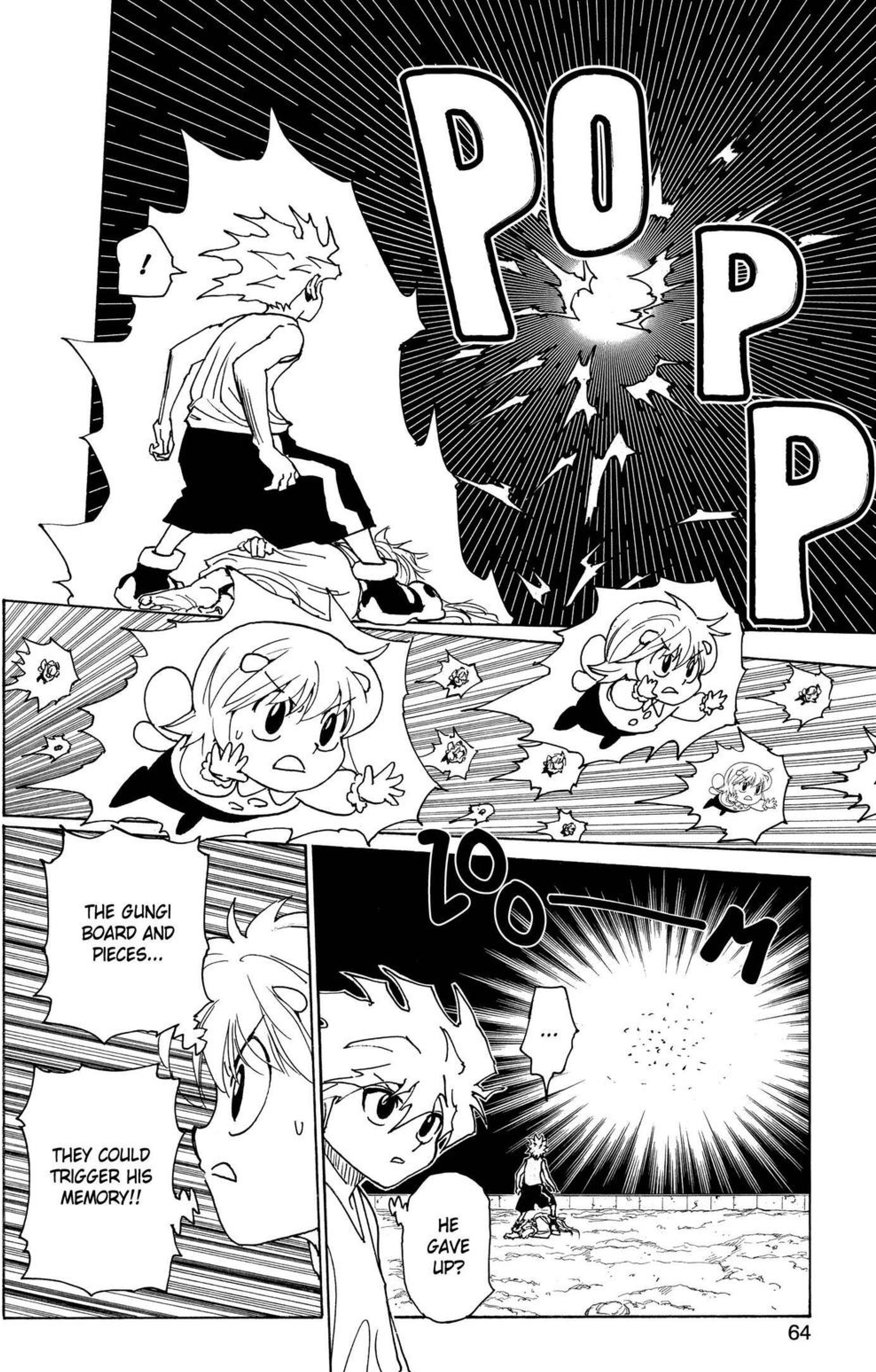

NOW THAT I'VE RETURNED, THE REBELS POSE NO THREAT!
BEHOLD, LORD MERUEM!!
A SEA OF PEOPLE, AS FAR AS THE EYE CAN SEE!! DO YOU REMEMBER NOW?
THEY'RE ALL HERE FOR *YOU!!* THEY ALL ***BELONG*** TO YOU!! YOU WILL RULE OVER THESE IGNORANT MASSES AND STAND AT THE TOP OF THE FOOD CHAIN!!
...
THEY ARE MY...

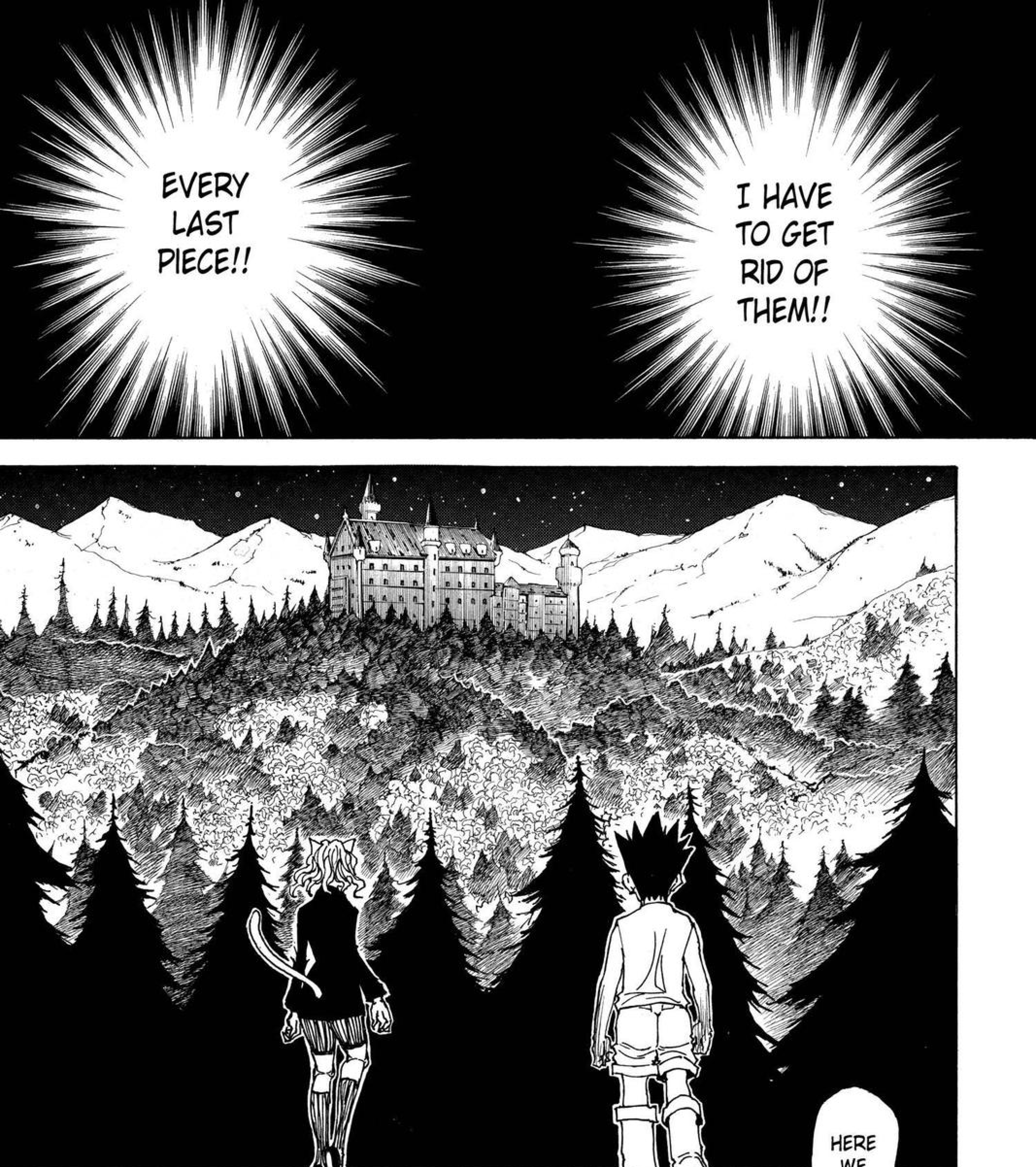

THE ENTIRE WORLD WILL SHINE BENEATH YOUR GLORIOUS LIGHT!!
THIS IS YOUR DIVINE DESTINY!!!
SOMETHING IS NOT RIGHT...
THROB THROB


NO.
HUH?
NOT THIS.
THROB
THERE WAS SOMETHING *ELSE*...
THROB
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?
THERE'S NO GREATER GOAL THAN RULING OVER *ALL LIFE!!*
PERHAPS...
THROB
THROB
...I AM CONFUSED FROM THE EXPLOSION.
THROB
THE PAIN HAS NOT PASSED...
THROB
THROB

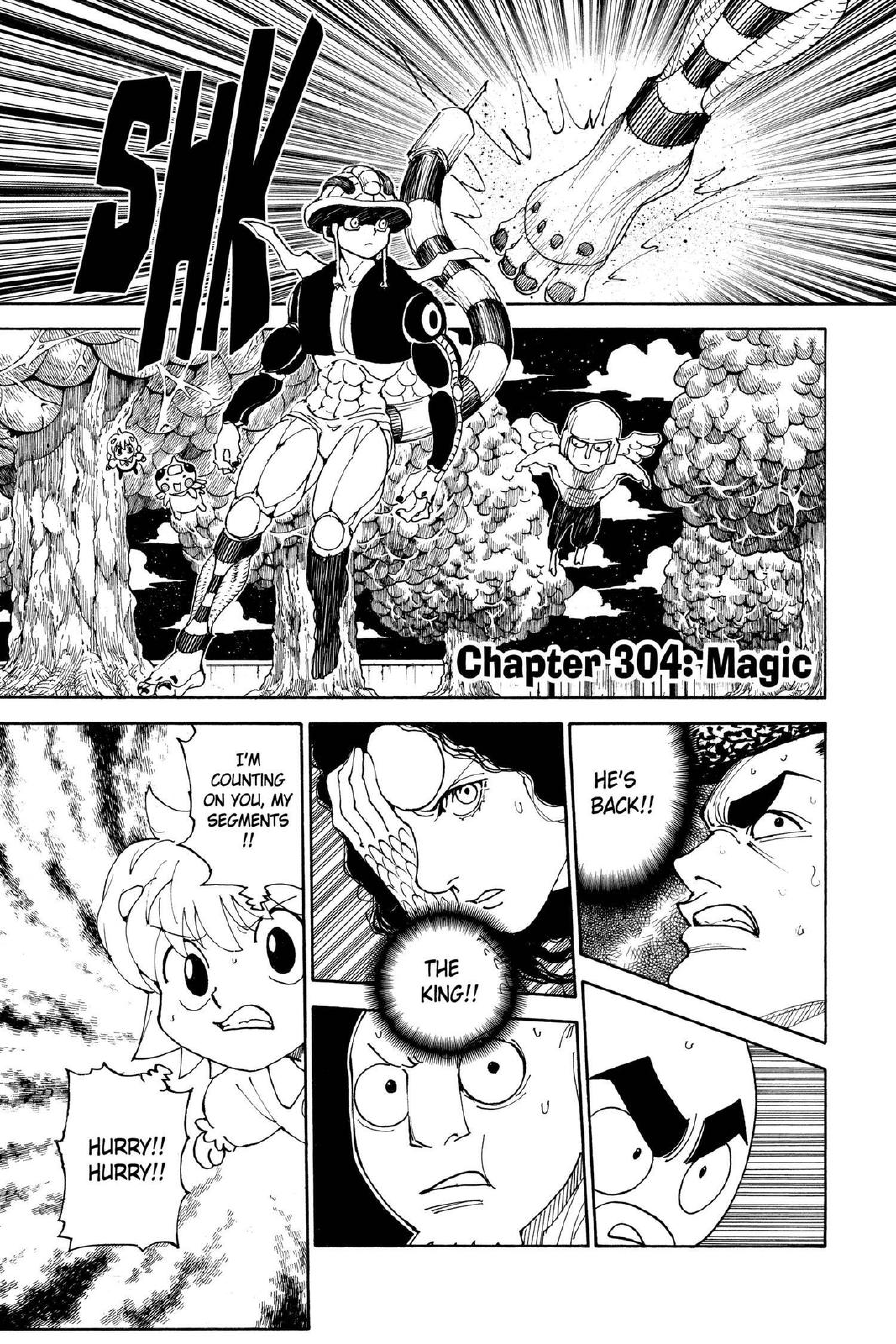
READ THIS WAY

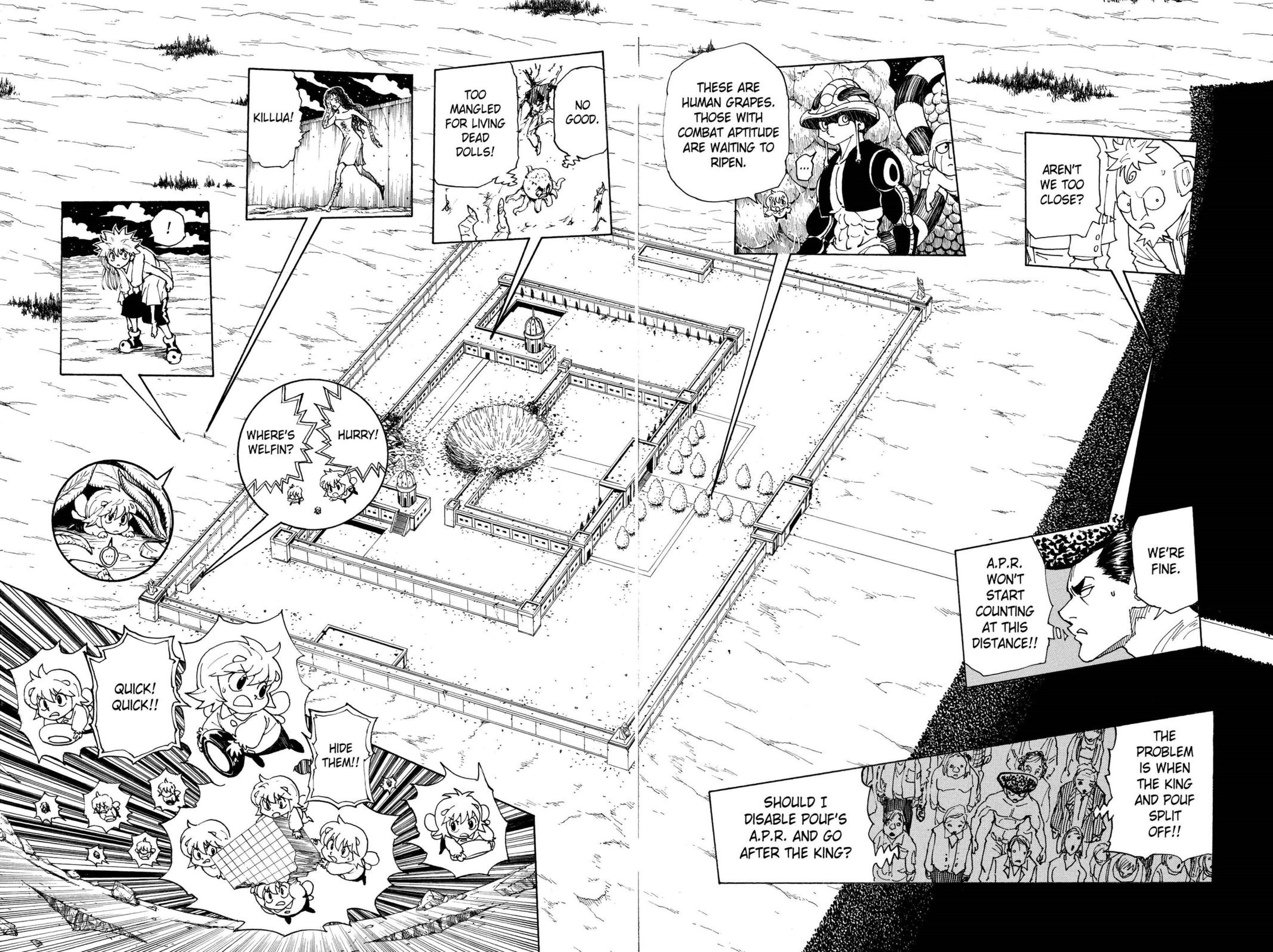

...
WHY IS THE PALACE IN THIS STATE?
THAT HAPPENED AFTER YOU LEFT.
IT WAS DAMAGED IN THE STRUGGLE WITH THE ENEMY.
WHERE ...
...DID I USUALLY STAY?
...
THERE'S NO TRACE OF IT LEFT.
I WANT TO SEE THE REMAINING STRUCTURES.
YES, SIR.
WE MAY FIND SOME CLUES TO HELP YOU WITH YOUR MEMORY.
URK!
UH-OH ...
NOT THIS !!

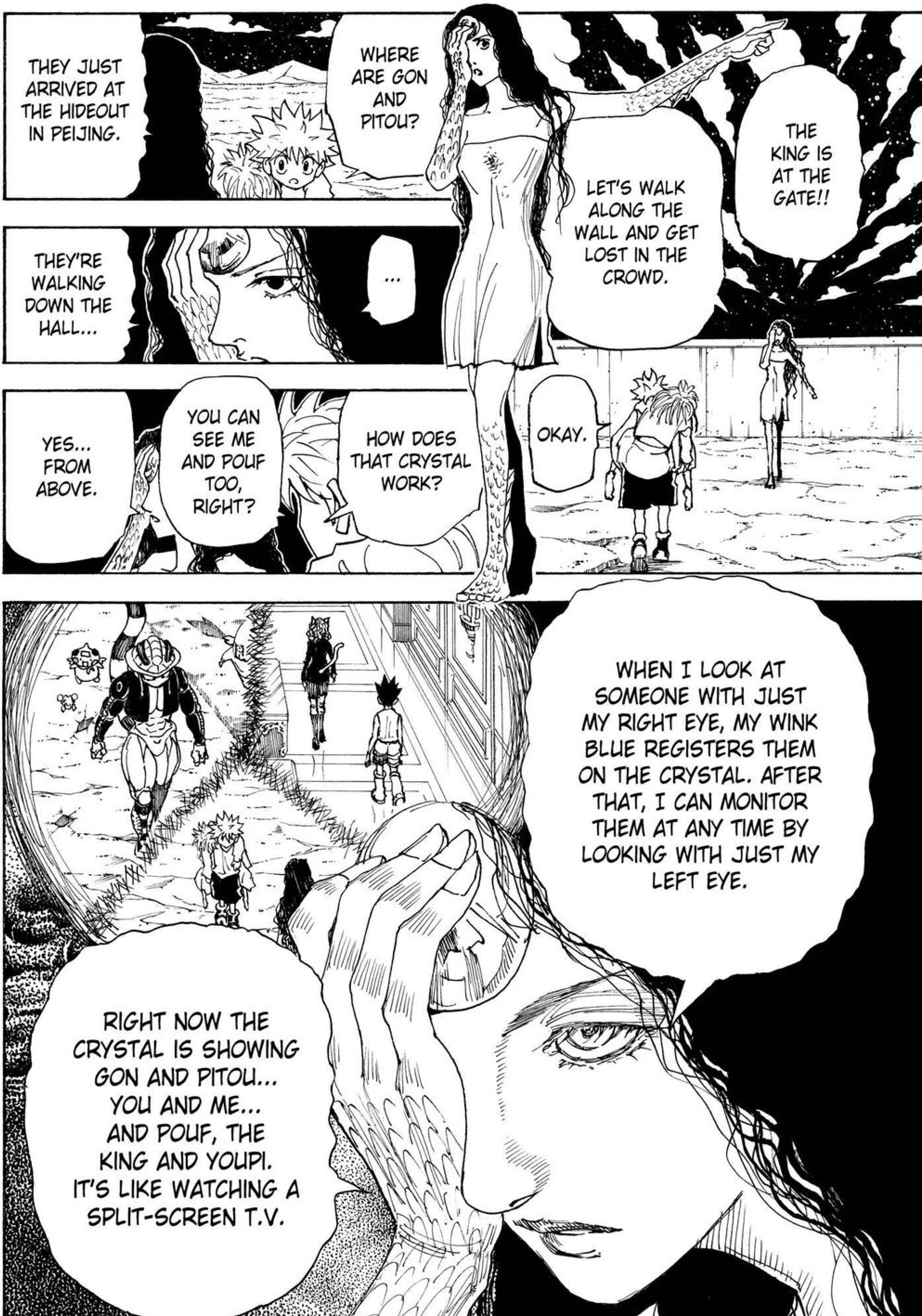

POP
POP
P
!
ZOO——M
...
HE GAVE UP?
THE GUNGI BOARD AND PIECES...
THEY COULD TRIGGER HIS MEMORY!!

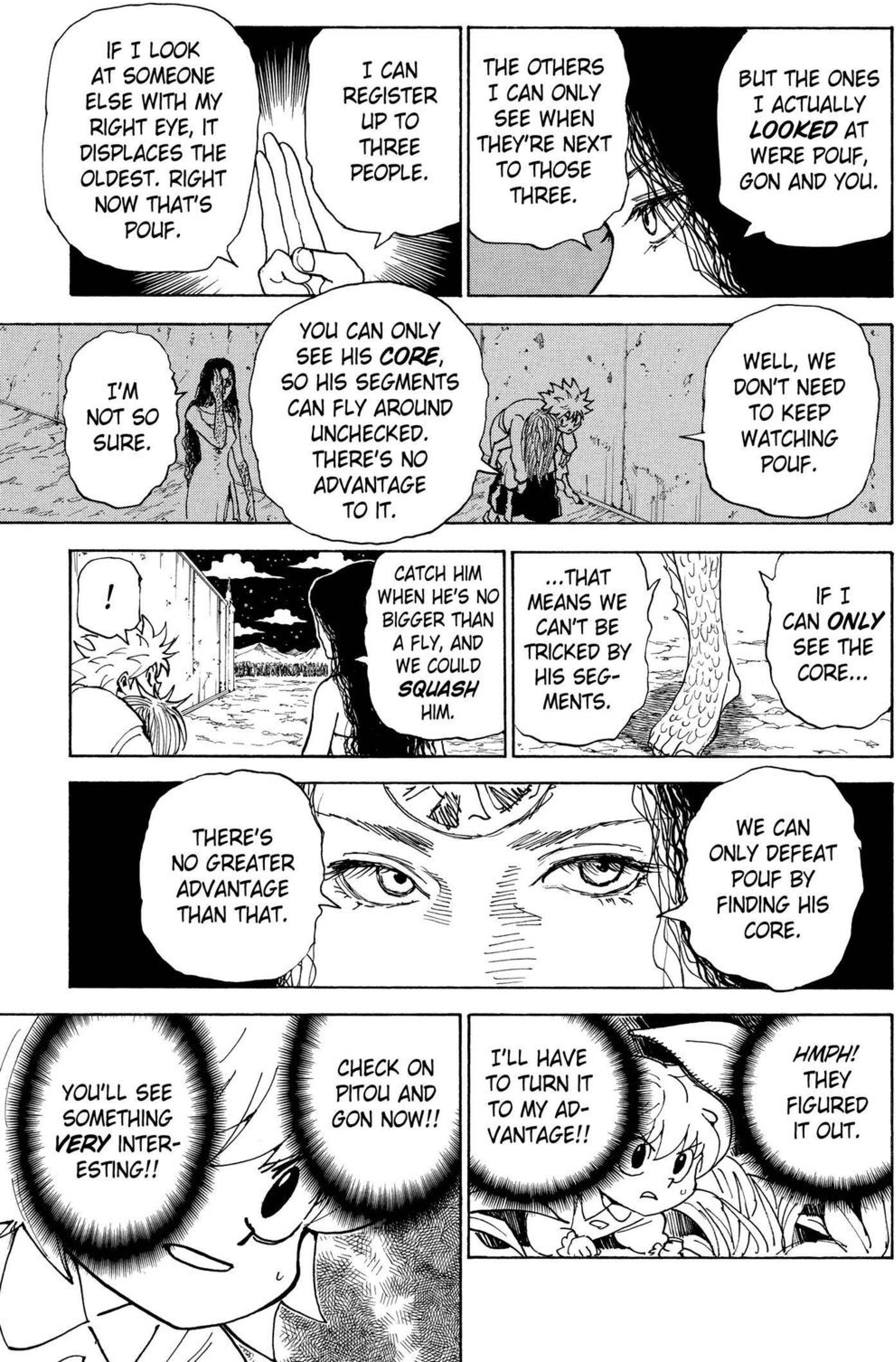

I HAVE TO GET RID OF THEM!!
EVERY LAST PIECE!!
HERE WE ARE.
LET'S GO.

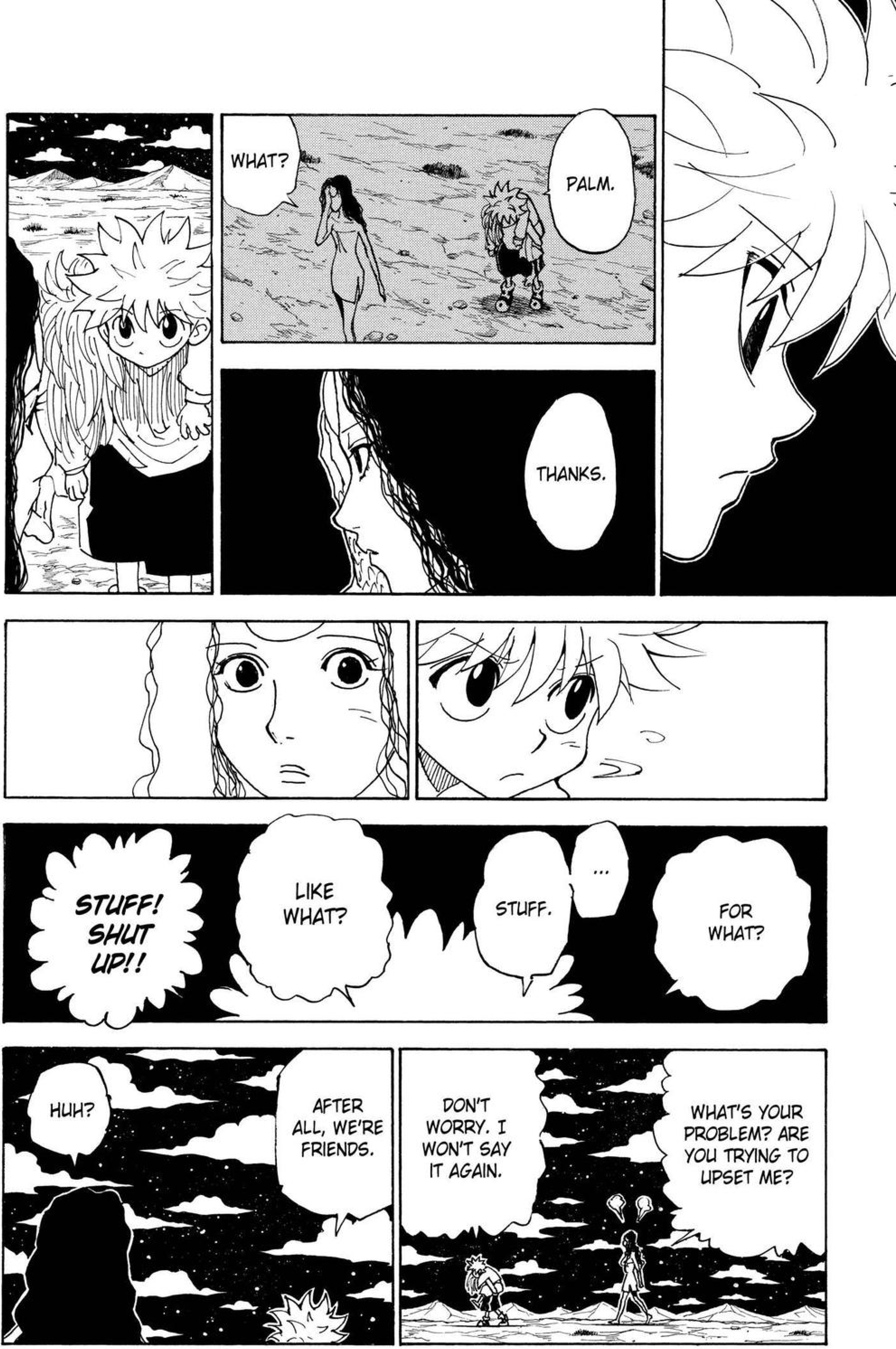
Chapter 304: Magic

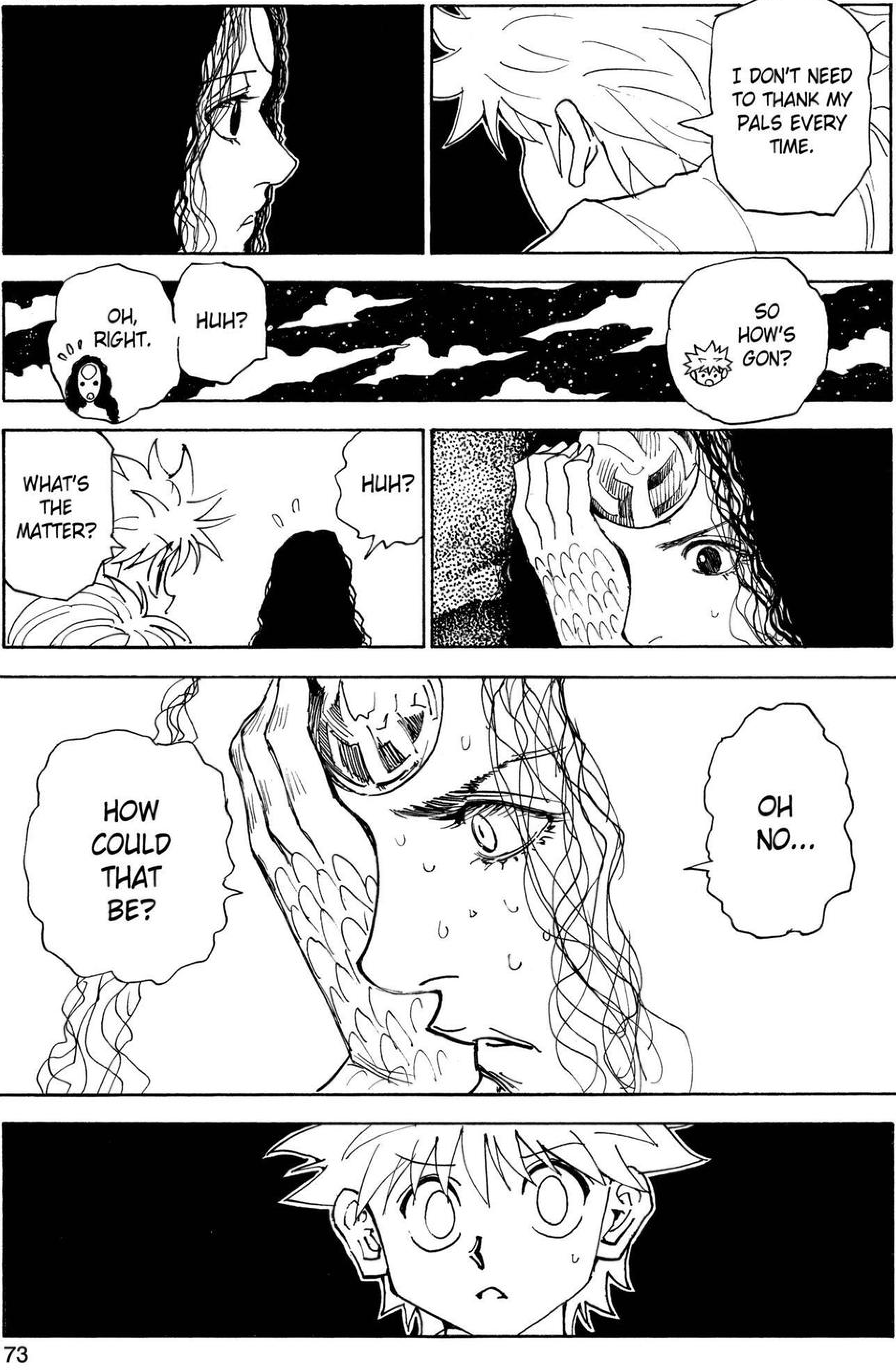

SHK
HE'S BACK!!
THE KING!!
I'M COUNTING ON YOU, MY SEGMENTS!!
HURRY!! HURRY!!

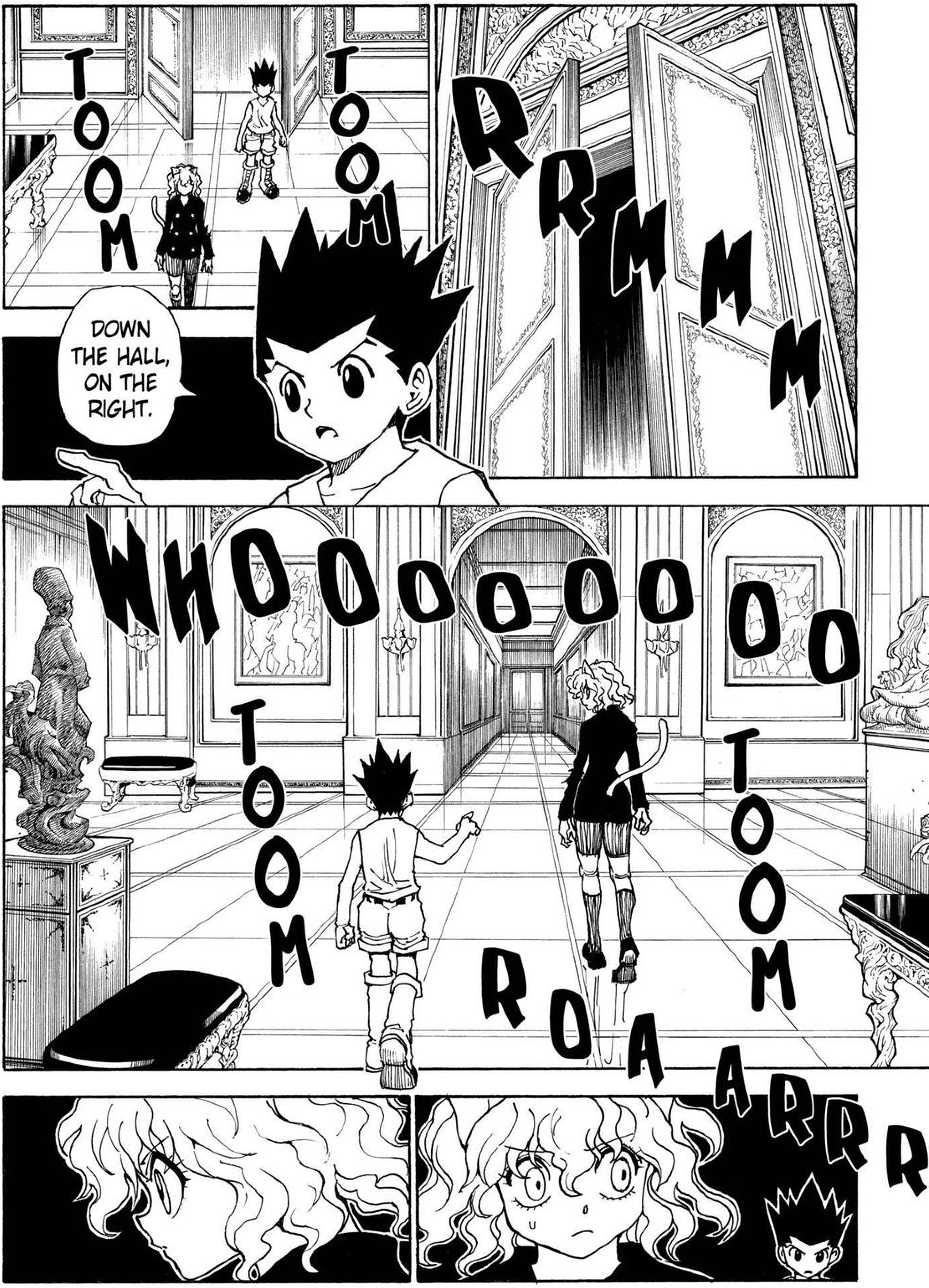

AREN'T WE TOO CLOSE?
THESE ARE HUMAN GRAPES. THOSE WITH COMBAT APTITUDE ARE WAITING TO RIPEN.
...
WE'RE FINE.
A.P.R. WON'T START COUNTING AT THIS DISTANCE!!
THE PROBLEM IS WHEN THE KING AND POUF SPLIT OFF!!
SHOULD I DISABLE POUF'S A.P.R. AND GO AFTER THE KING?
NO GOOD.
TOO MANGLED FOR LIVING DEAD DOLLS!
KILLUA!
!
HURRY!
WHERE'S WELFIN?
...
QUICK! QUICK!!
HIDE THEM!!


THE KING IS AT THE GATE!!
LET'S WALK ALONG THE WALL AND GET LOST IN THE CROWD.
WHERE ARE GON AND PITOU?
THEY JUST ARRIVED AT THE HIDEOUT IN PEIJING.
...
THEY'RE WALKING DOWN THE HALL...
OKAY.
HOW DOES THAT CRYSTAL WORK?
YOU CAN SEE ME AND POUF TOO, RIGHT?
YES... FROM ABOVE.
WHEN I LOOK AT SOMEONE WITH JUST MY RIGHT EYE, MY WINK BLUE REGISTERS THEM ON THE CRYSTAL. AFTER THAT, I CAN MONITOR THEM AT ANY TIME BY LOOKING WITH JUST MY LEFT EYE.
RIGHT NOW THE CRYSTAL IS SHOWING GON AND PITOU... YOU AND ME... AND POUF, THE KING AND YOUPI. IT'S LIKE WATCHING A SPLIT-SCREEN T.V.

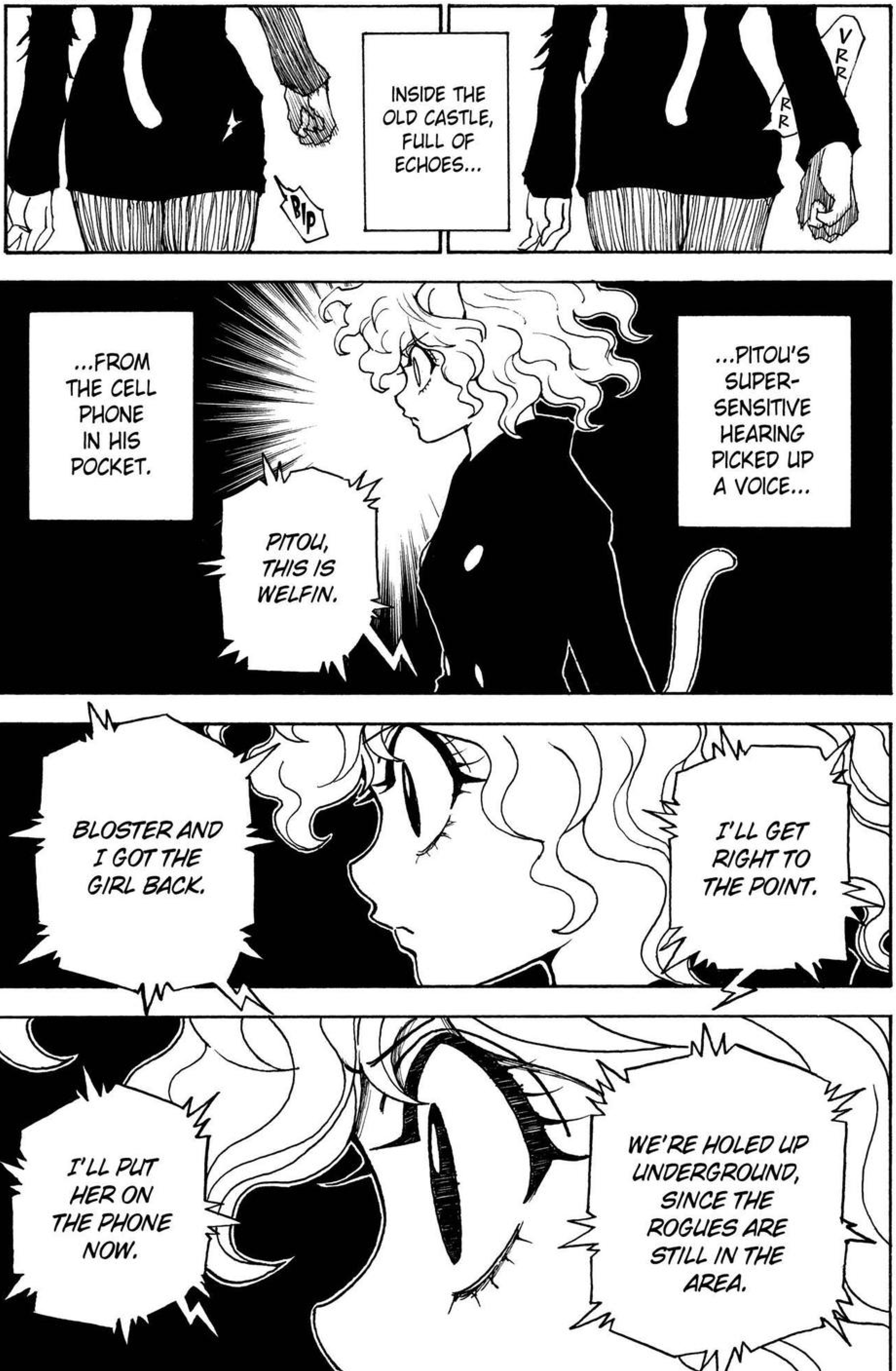

BUT THE ONES I ACTUALLY *LOOKED* AT WERE POUF, GON AND YOU.
THE OTHERS I CAN ONLY SEE WHEN THEY'RE NEXT TO THOSE THREE.
I CAN REGISTER UP TO THREE PEOPLE.
IF I LOOK AT SOMEONE ELSE WITH MY RIGHT EYE, IT DISPLACES THE OLDEST. RIGHT NOW THAT'S POUF.
WELL, WE DON'T NEED TO KEEP WATCHING POUF.
YOU CAN ONLY SEE HIS *CORE*, SO HIS SEGMENTS CAN FLY AROUND UNCHECKED. THERE'S NO ADVANTAGE TO IT.
I'M NOT SO SURE.
IF I CAN *ONLY* SEE THE CORE...
...THAT MEANS WE CAN'T BE TRICKED BY HIS SEGMENTS.
CATCH HIM WHEN HE'S NO BIGGER THAN A FLY, AND WE COULD *SQUASH* HIM.
!
WE CAN ONLY DEFEAT POUF BY FINDING HIS CORE.
THERE'S NO GREATER ADVANTAGE THAN THAT.
HMPH! THEY FIGURED IT OUT.
I'LL HAVE TO TURN IT TO MY ADVANTAGE!!
CHECK ON PITOU AND GON NOW!!
YOU'LL SEE SOMETHING *VERY* INTERESTING!!

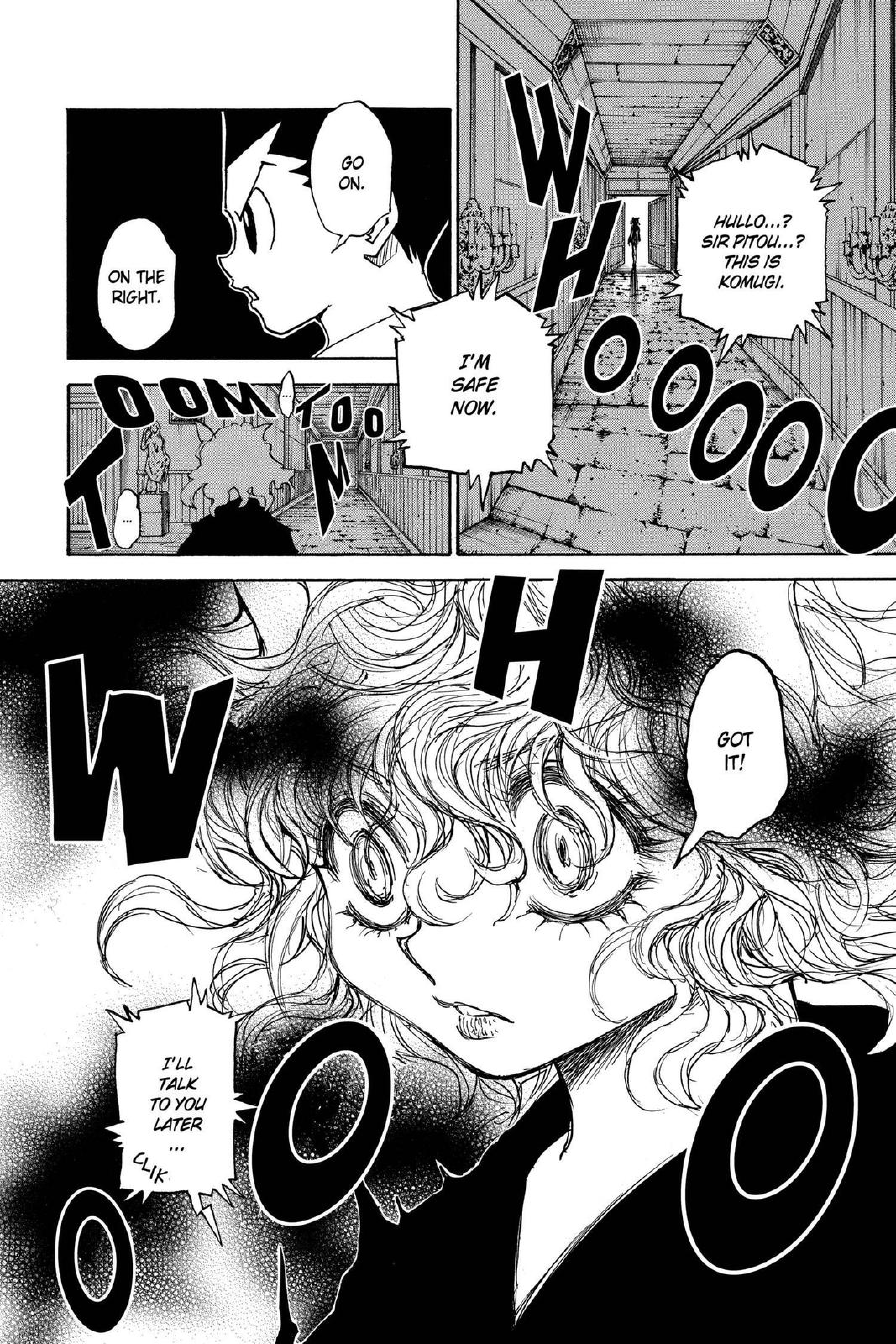

PALM.
WHAT?
THANKS.
FOR WHAT?
...
STUFF.
LIKE WHAT?
STUFF! SHUT UP!!
WHAT'S YOUR PROBLEM? ARE YOU TRYING TO UPSET ME?
DON'T WORRY. I WON'T SAY IT AGAIN.
AFTER ALL, WE'RE FRIENDS.
HUH?

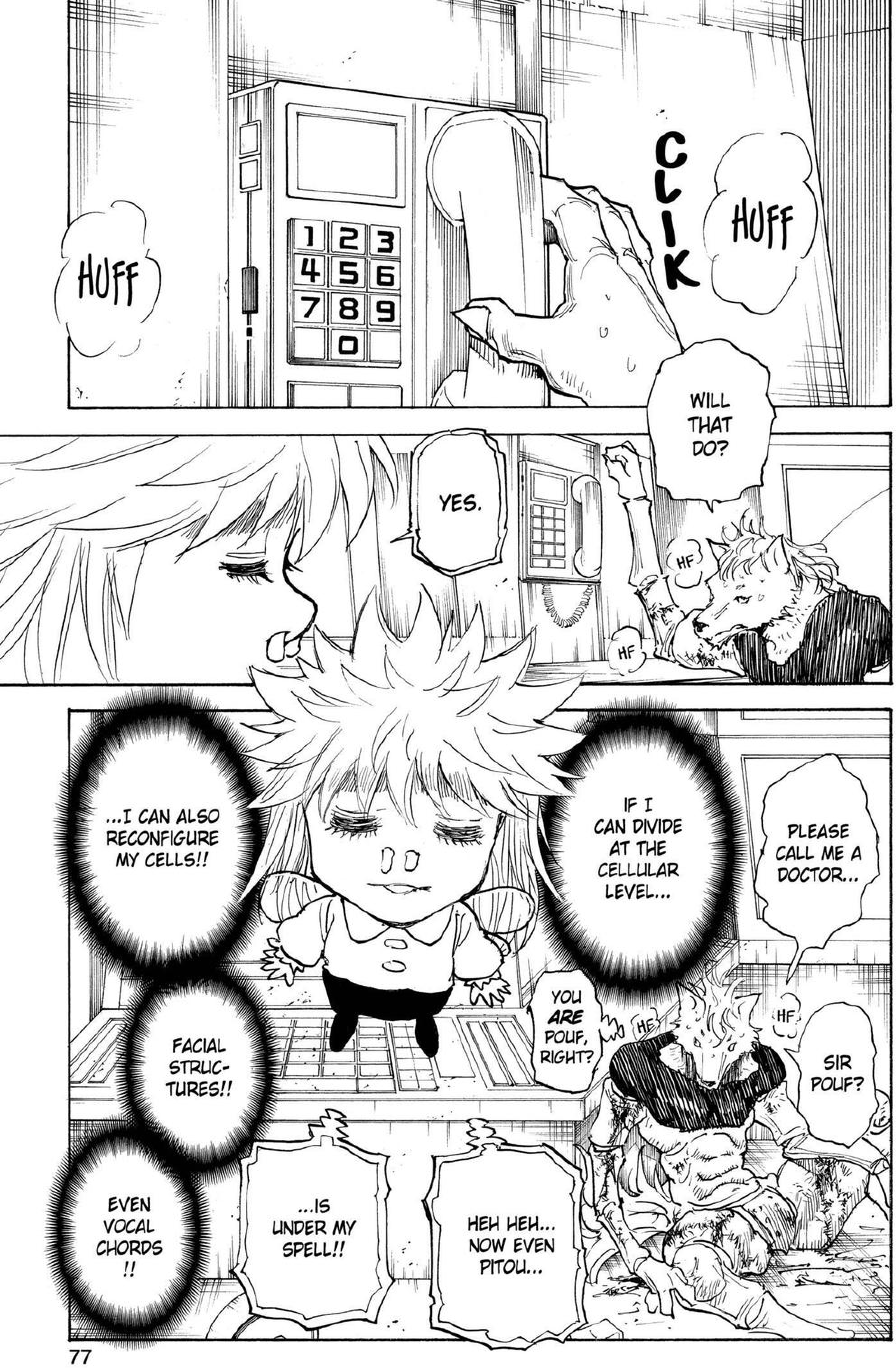

I DON'T NEED TO THANK MY PALS EVERY TIME.
SO HOW'S GON?
HUH?
OH, RIGHT.
HUH?
WHAT'S THE MATTER?
OH NO...
HOW COULD THAT BE?

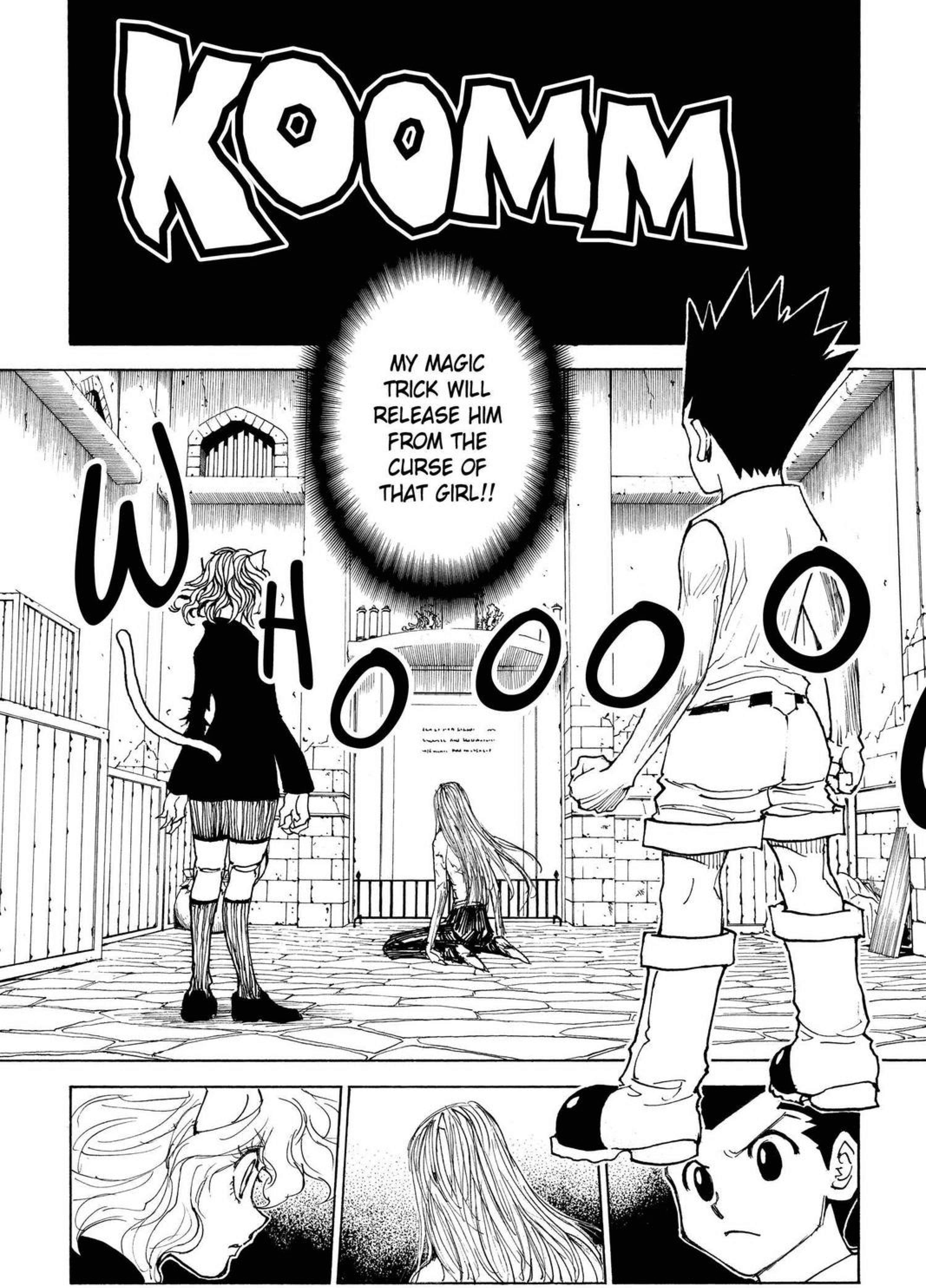

RRRMMMMM
TOOM
TOOM
DOWN THE HALL, ON THE RIGHT.
WHOOOOOOOOO
TOOM
TOOM
ROAAARRR

READ THIS WAY

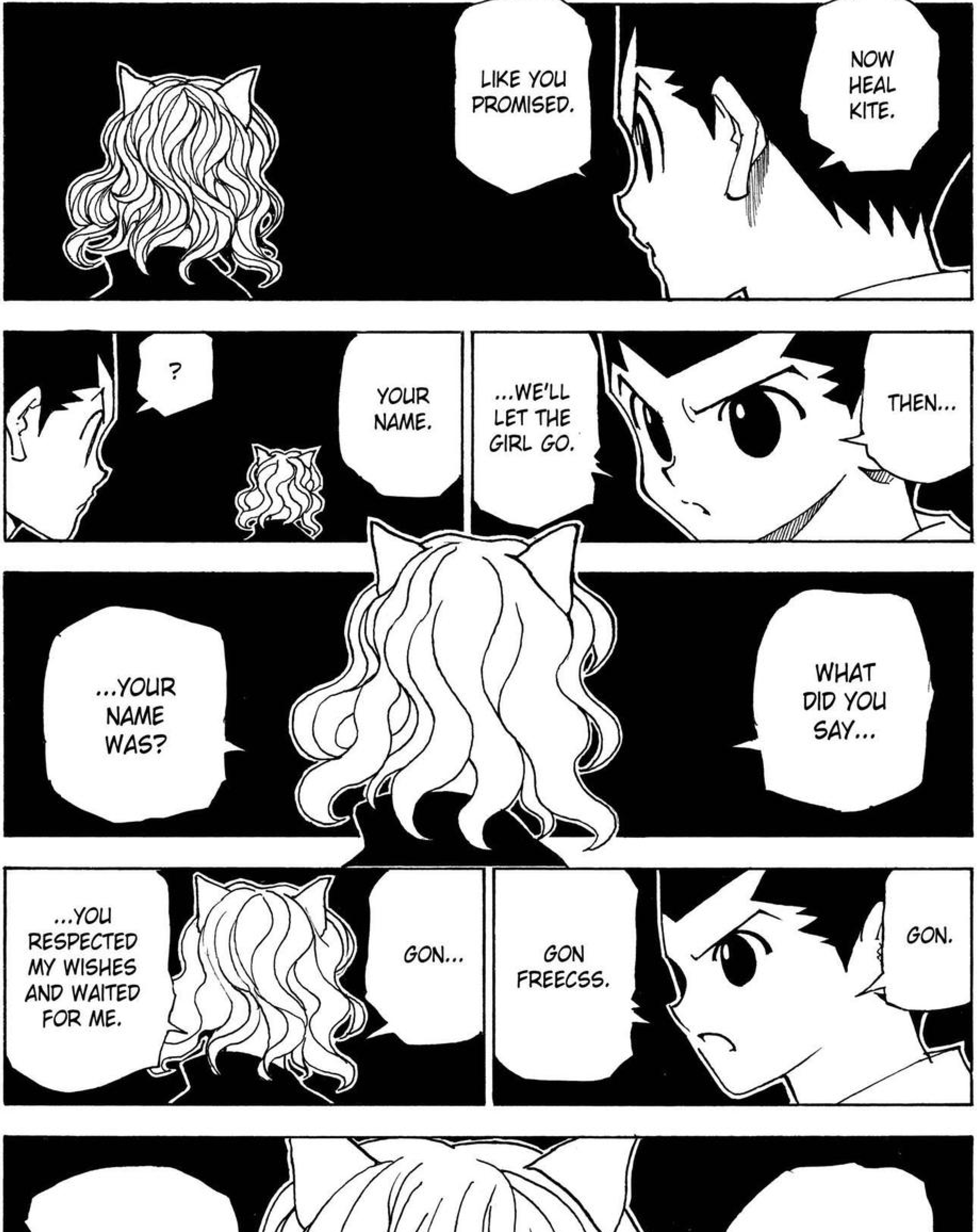

VRRR RR
INSIDE THE OLD CASTLE, FULL OF ECHOES...
BIP
...PITOU'S SUPER-SENSITIVE HEARING PICKED UP A VOICE...
...FROM THE CELL PHONE IN HIS POCKET.
PITOU, THIS IS WELFIN.
I'LL GET RIGHT TO THE POINT.
BLOSTER AND I GOT THE GIRL BACK.
WE'RE HOLED UP UNDERGROUND, SINCE THE ROGUES ARE STILL IN THE AREA.
I'LL PUT HER ON THE PHONE NOW.

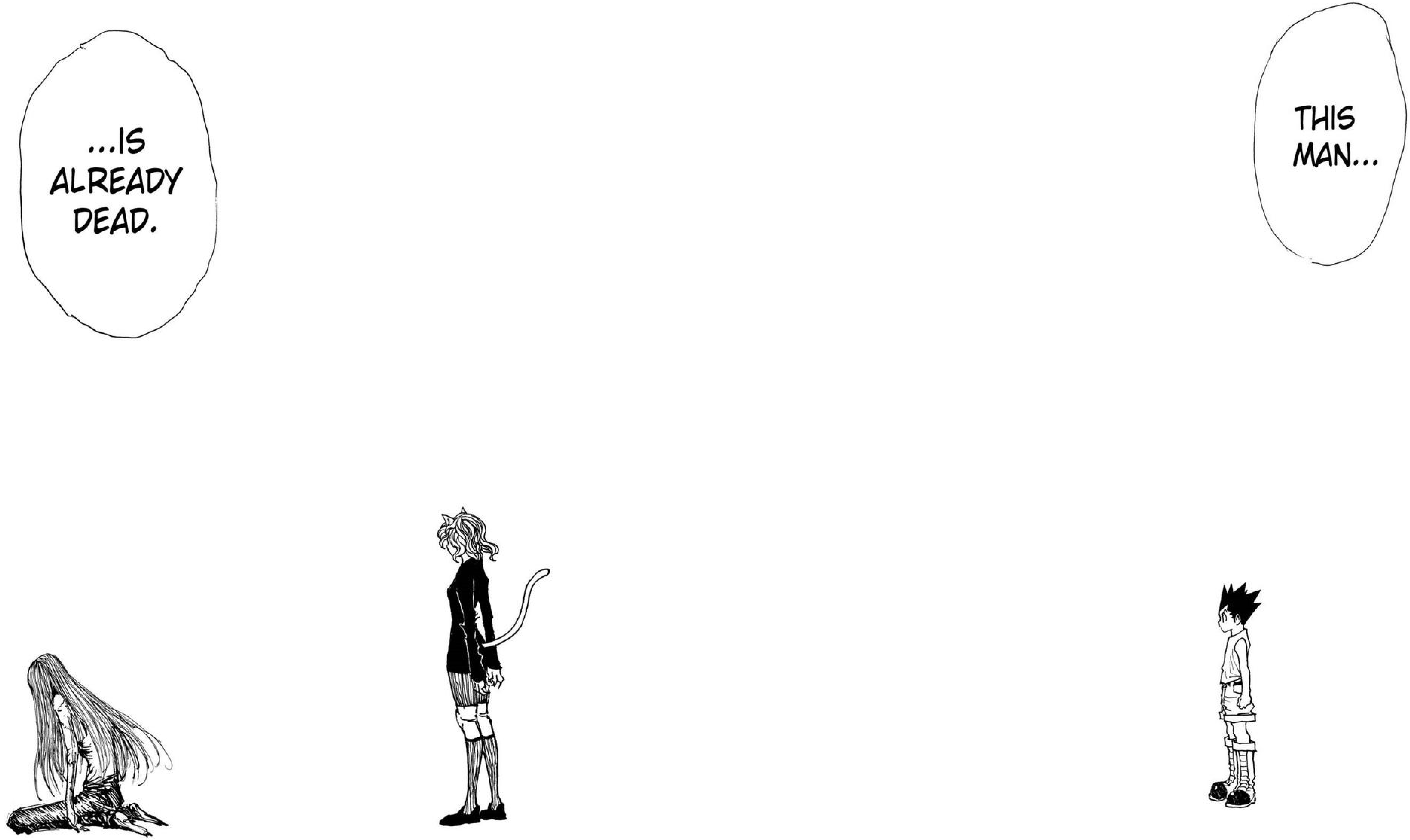

WHOOOOO
HULLO...? SIR PITOU...? THIS IS KOMUGI.
GO ON.
ON THE RIGHT.
I'M SAFE NOW.
TOOM TOOM
...
...
WHOOOOO
GOT IT!
I'LL TALK TO YOU LATER...
CLIK

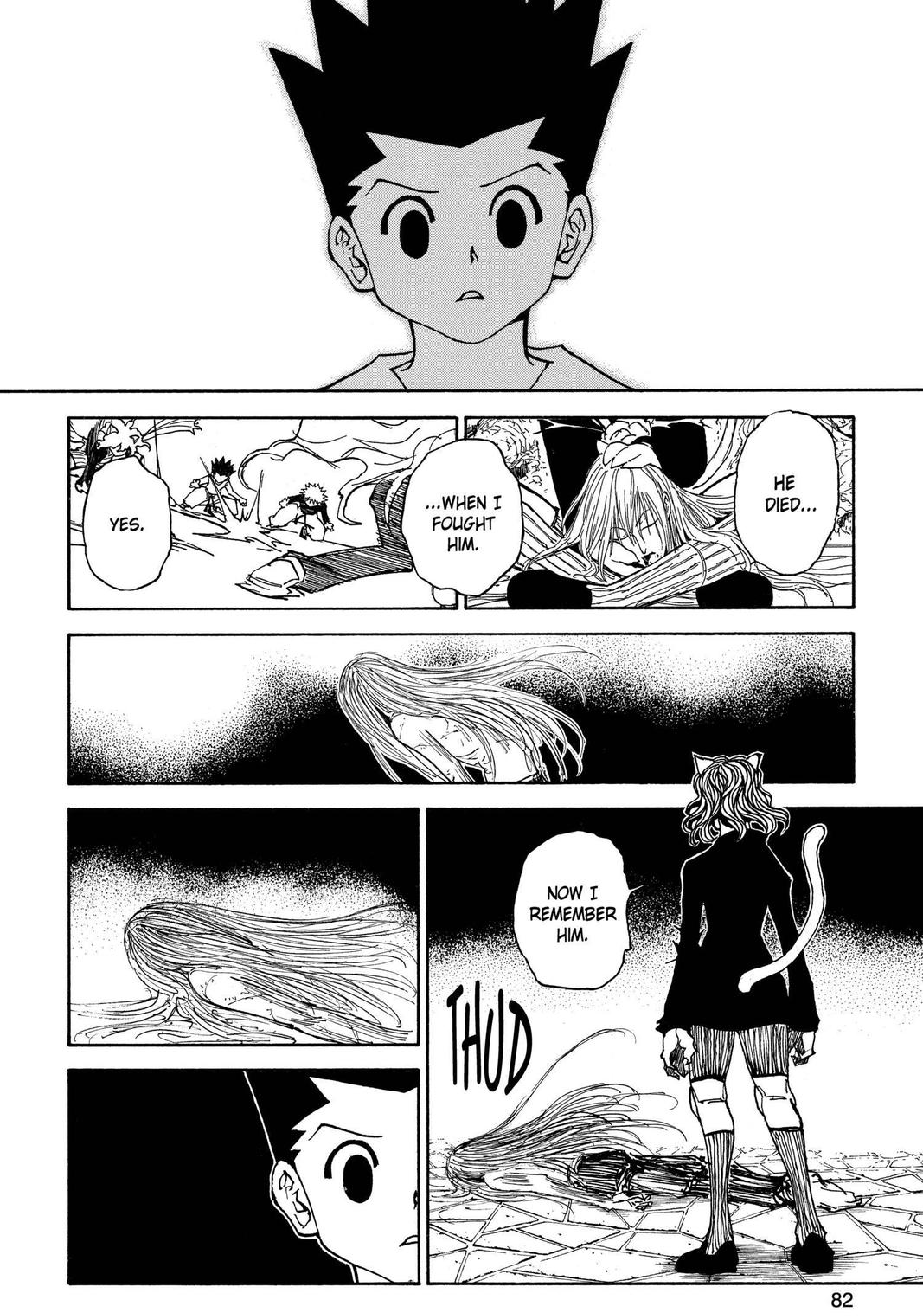

HUFF
CLIK
HUFF
WILL THAT DO?
YES.
HF
HF
PLEASE CALL ME A DOCTOR...
IF I CAN DIVIDE AT THE CELLULAR LEVEL...
...I CAN ALSO RECONFIGURE MY CELLS!!
FACIAL STRUC-TURES!!
EVEN VOCAL CHORDS !!
HF
SIR POUF?
HE
YOU *ARE* POUF, RIGHT?
HEH HEH... NOW EVEN PITOU...
...IS UNDER MY SPELL!!

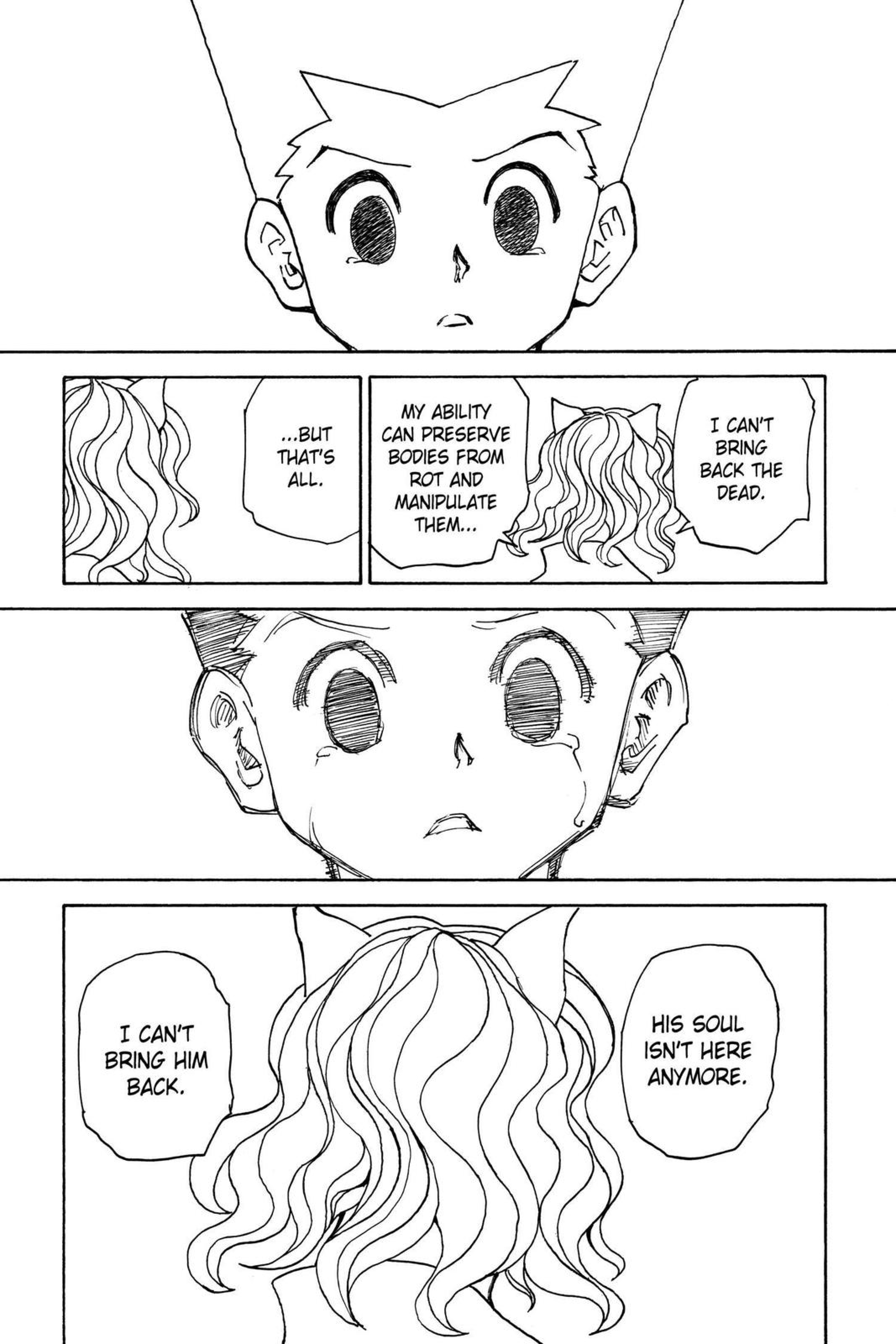

KOOMM
MY MAGIC TRICK WILL RELEASE HIM FROM THE CURSE OF THAT GIRL!!
WHOOOOO

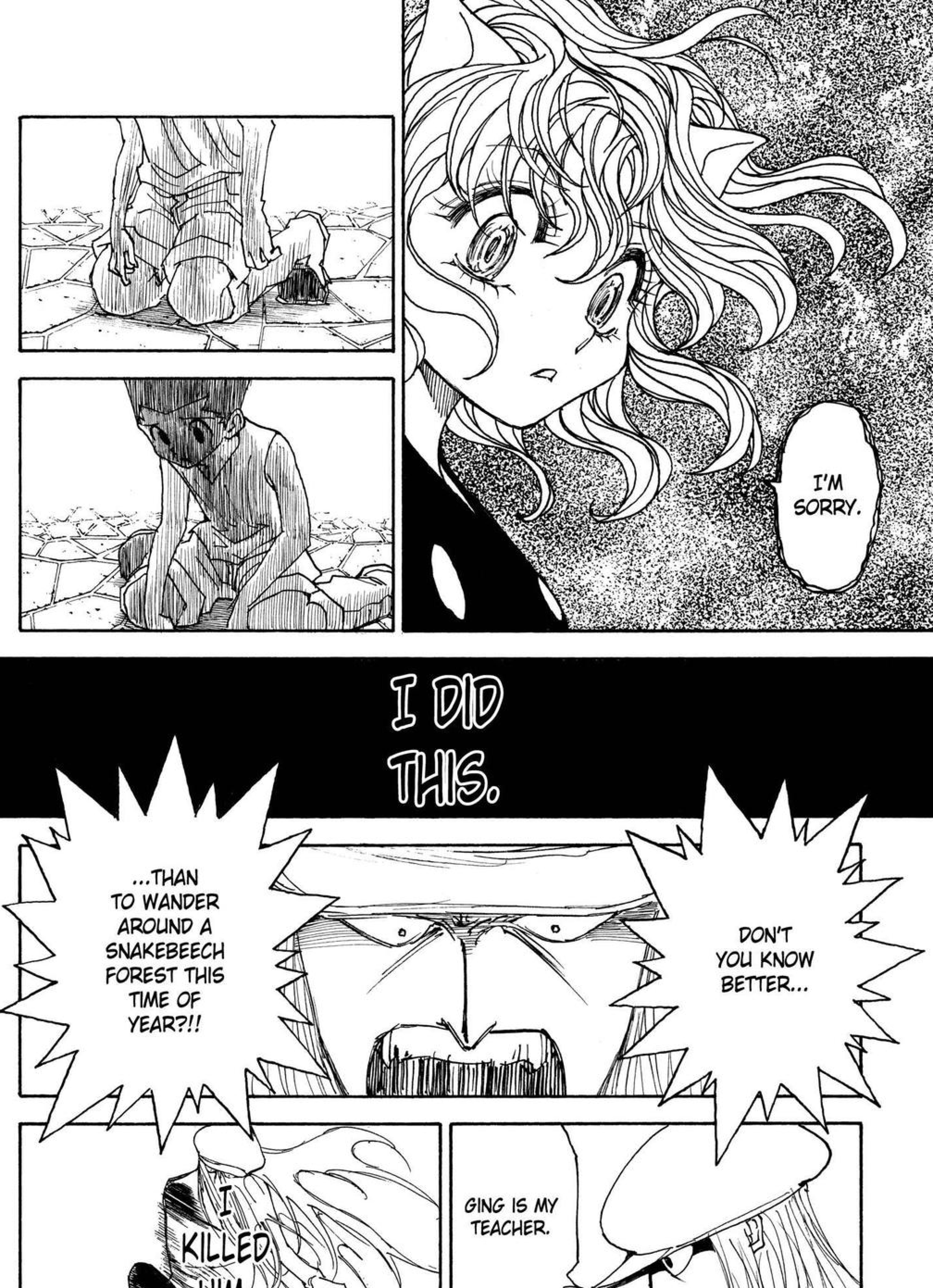
READ THIS WAY

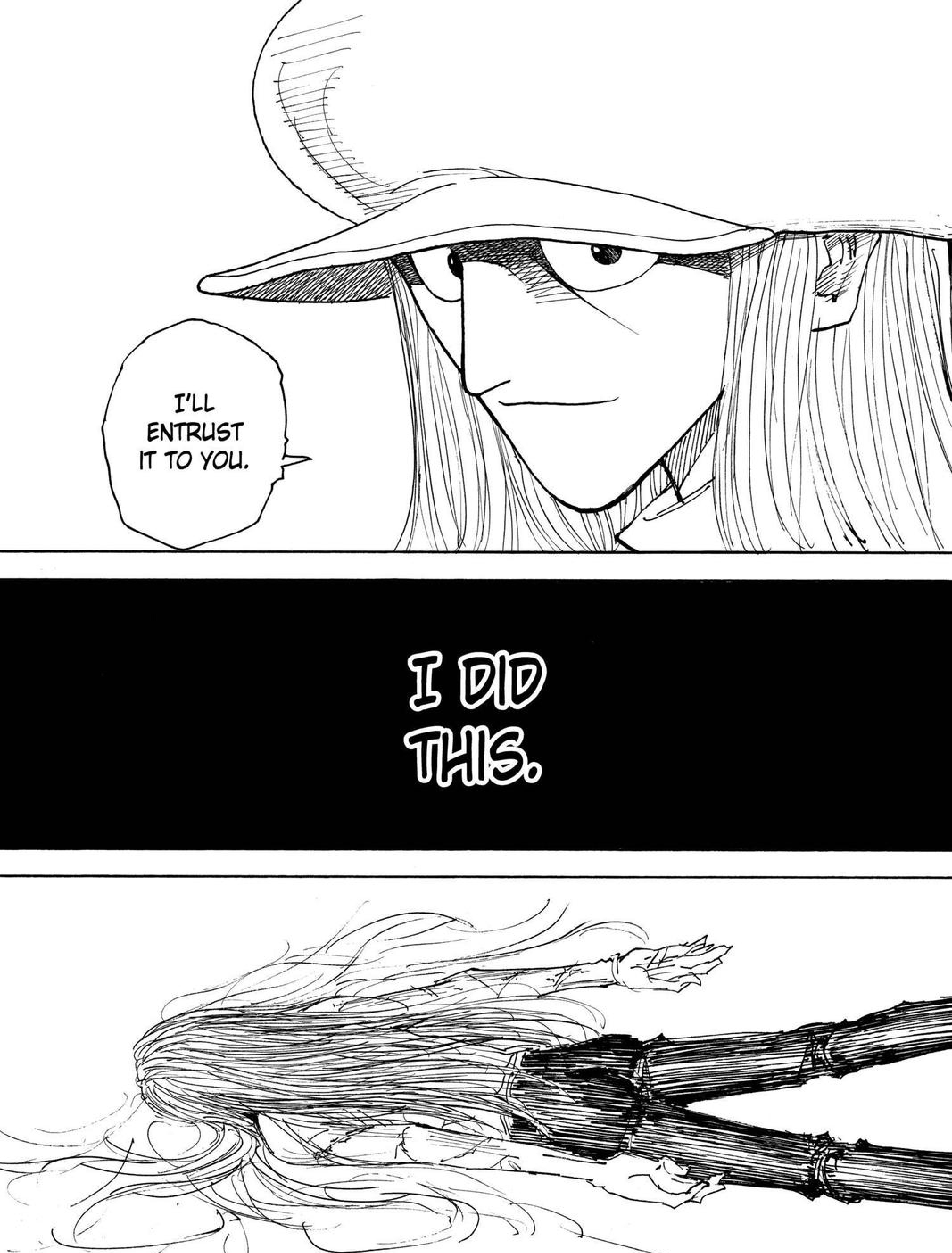

NOW HEAL KITE.
LIKE YOU PROMISED.
THEN...
...WE'LL LET THE GIRL GO.
YOUR NAME.
?
WHAT DID YOU SAY...
...YOUR NAME WAS?
GON.
GON FREECSS.
GON...
...YOU RESPECTED MY WISHES AND WAITED FOR ME.
SO I FEEL I SHOULD AT LEAST...
...BE HONEST WITH YOU.

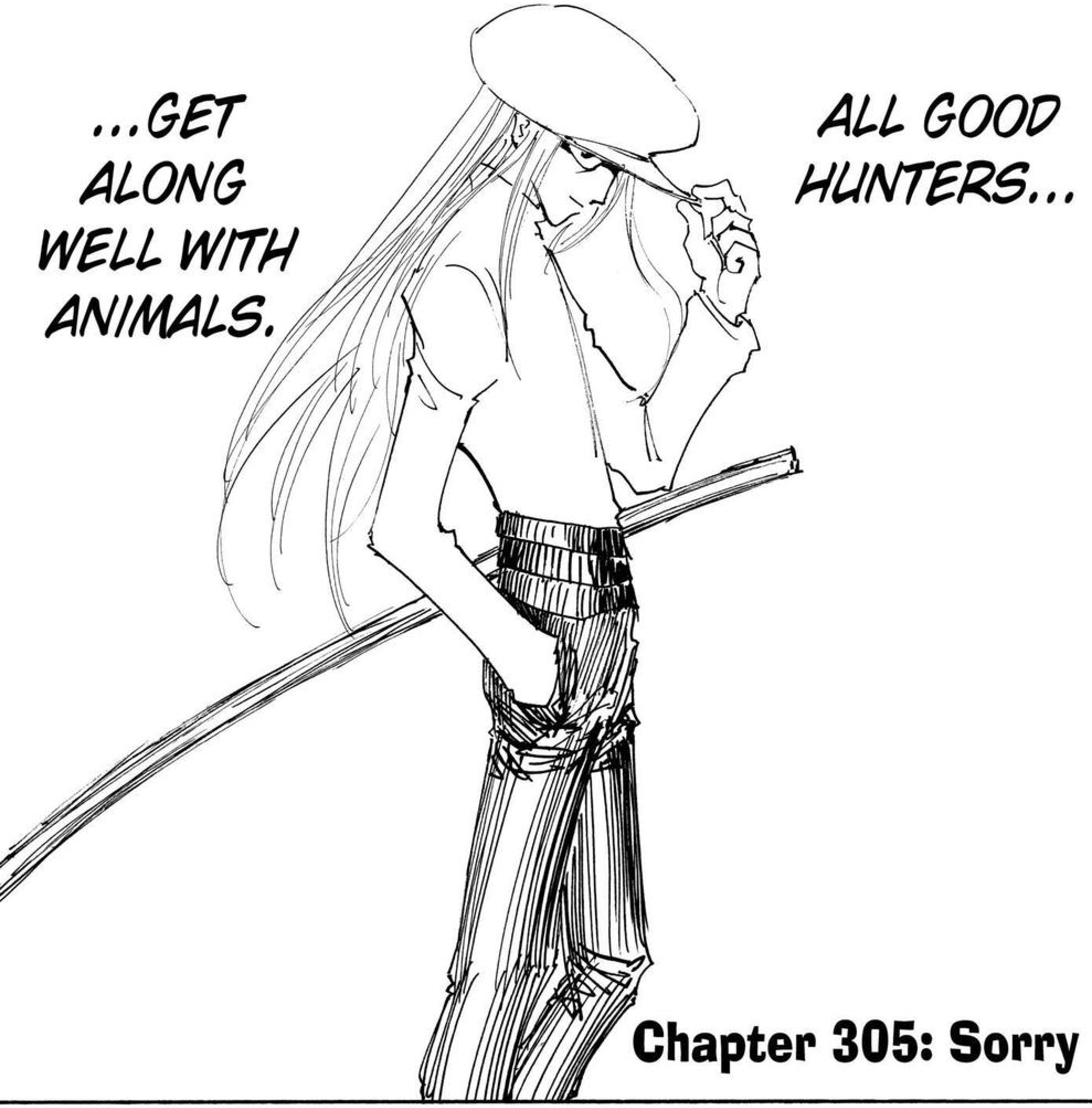

THIS MAN...
...IS ALREADY DEAD.


HE DIED...
...WHEN I FOUGHT HIM.
YES.
NOW I REMEMBER HIM.
THUD

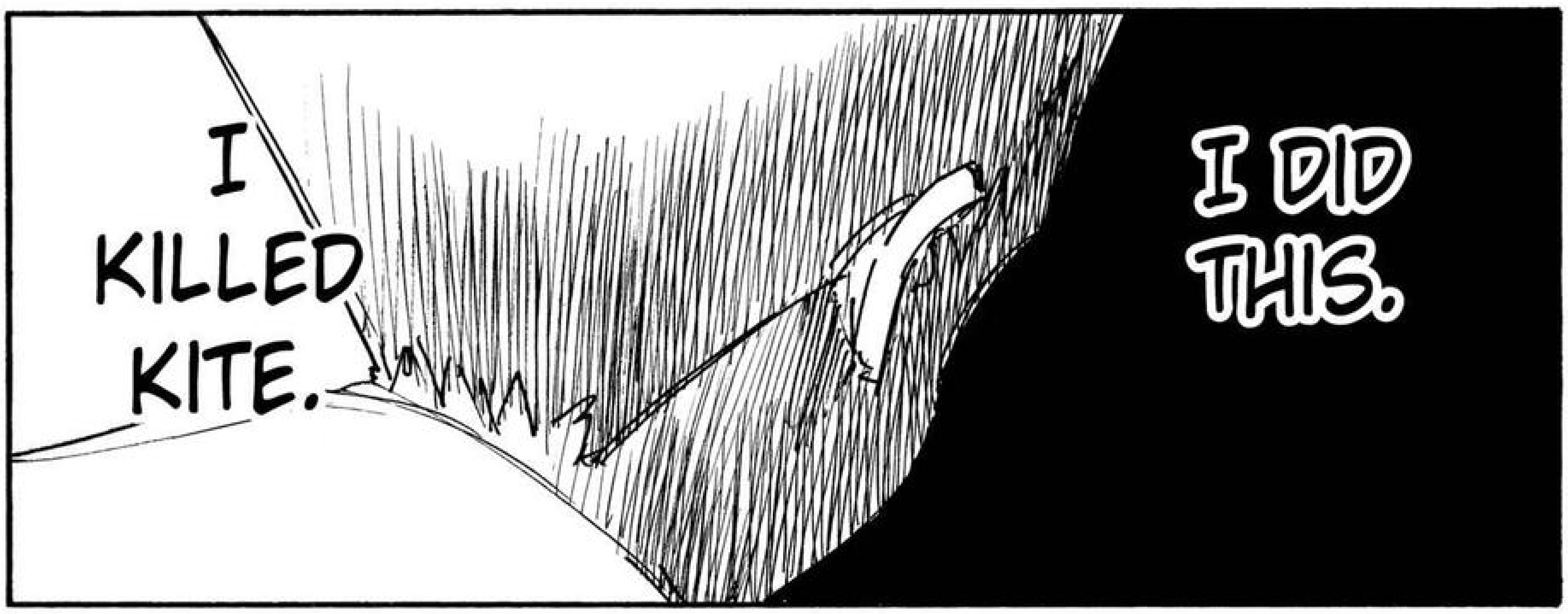

I CAN'T BRING BACK THE DEAD.
MY ABILITY CAN PRESERVE BODIES FROM ROT AND MANIPULATE THEM...
...BUT THAT'S ALL.
HIS SOUL ISN'T HERE ANYMORE.
I CAN'T BRING HIM BACK.

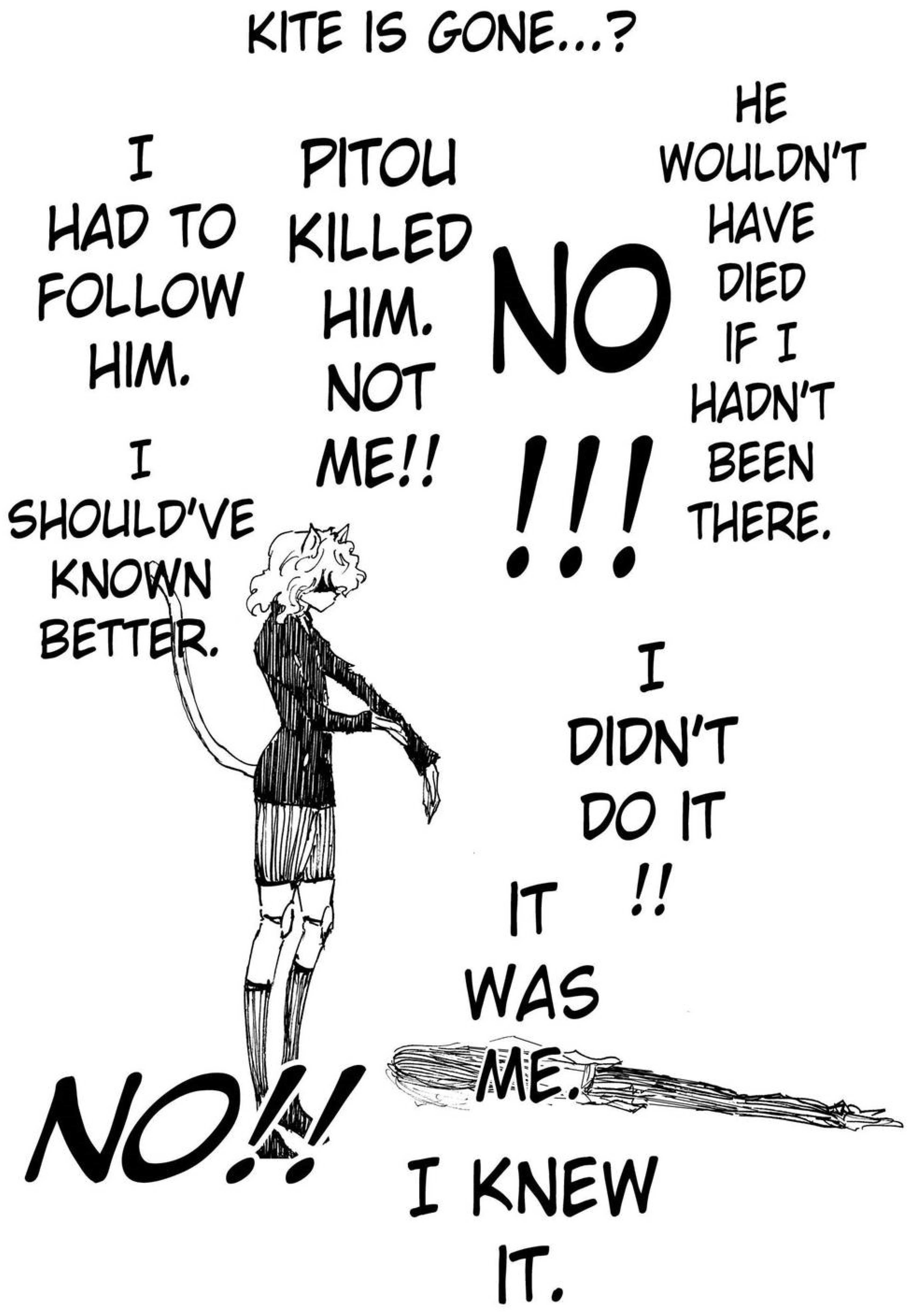

I'M SORRY.
I DID THIS.
DON'T YOU KNOW BETTER...
...THAN TO WANDER AROUND A SNAKEBEECH FOREST THIS TIME OF YEAR?!!
GING IS MY TEACHER.
I KILLED HIM.

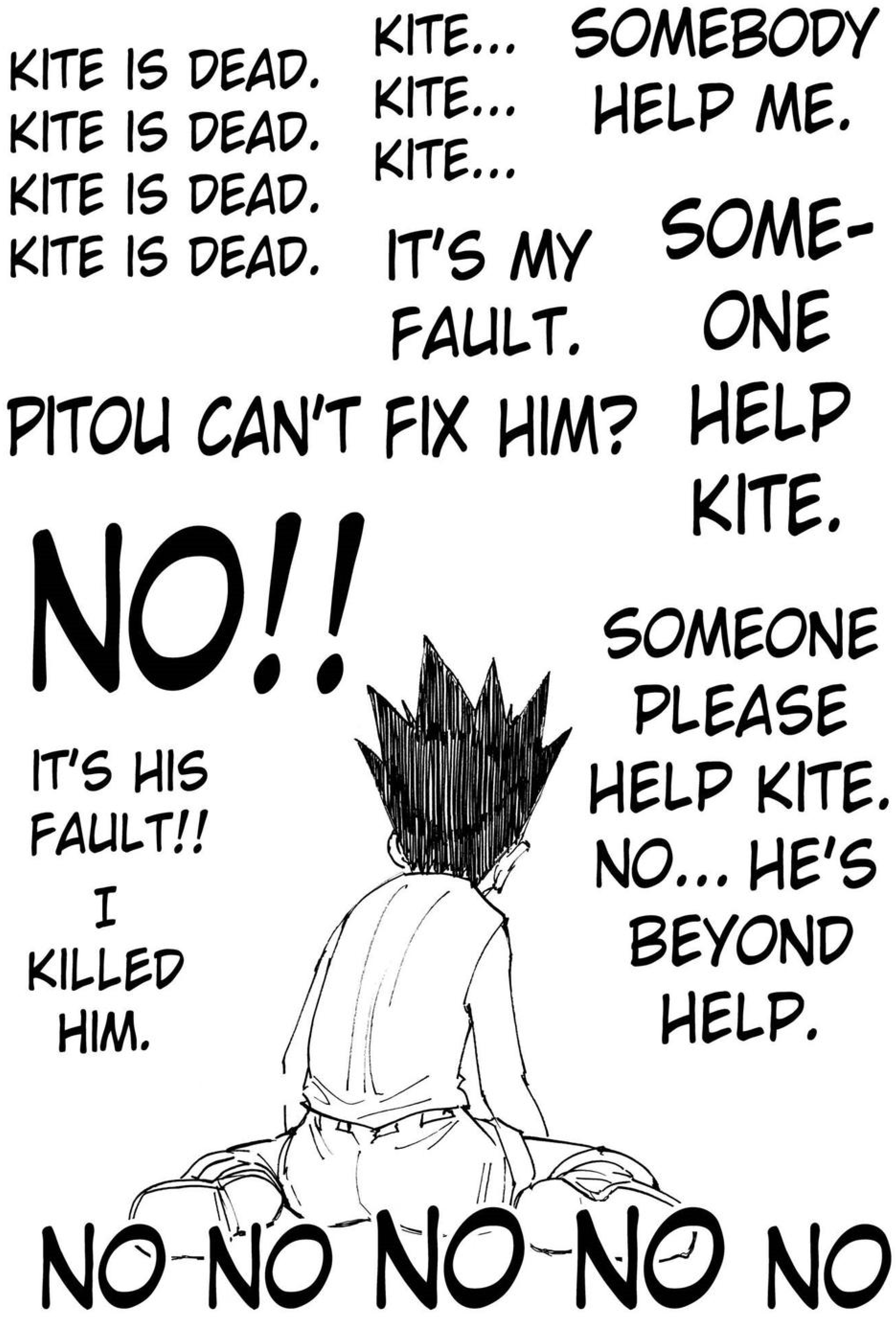

I'LL ENTRUST IT TO YOU.
I DID THIS.

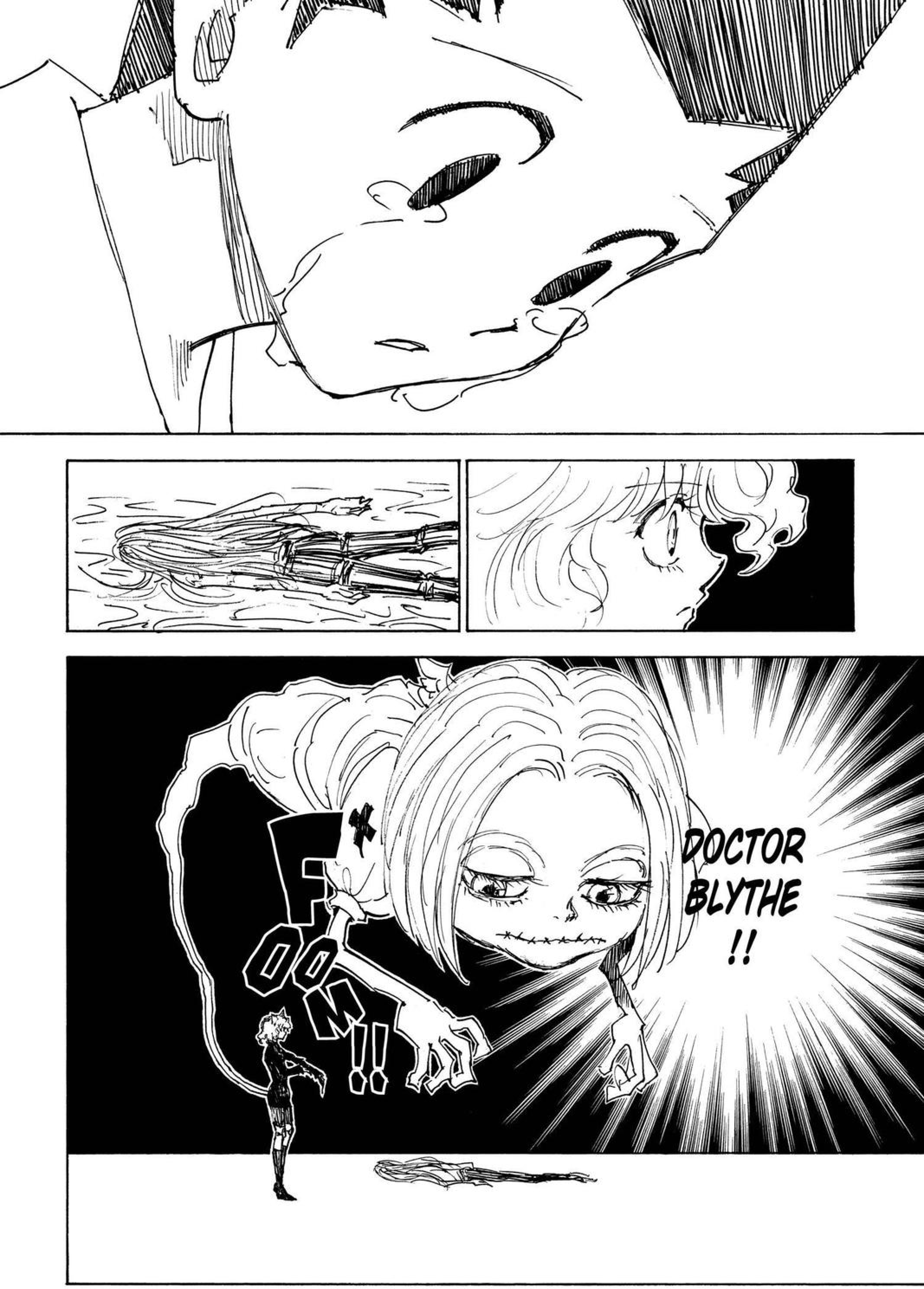

ALL GOOD HUNTERS...
...GET ALONG WELL WITH ANIMALS.

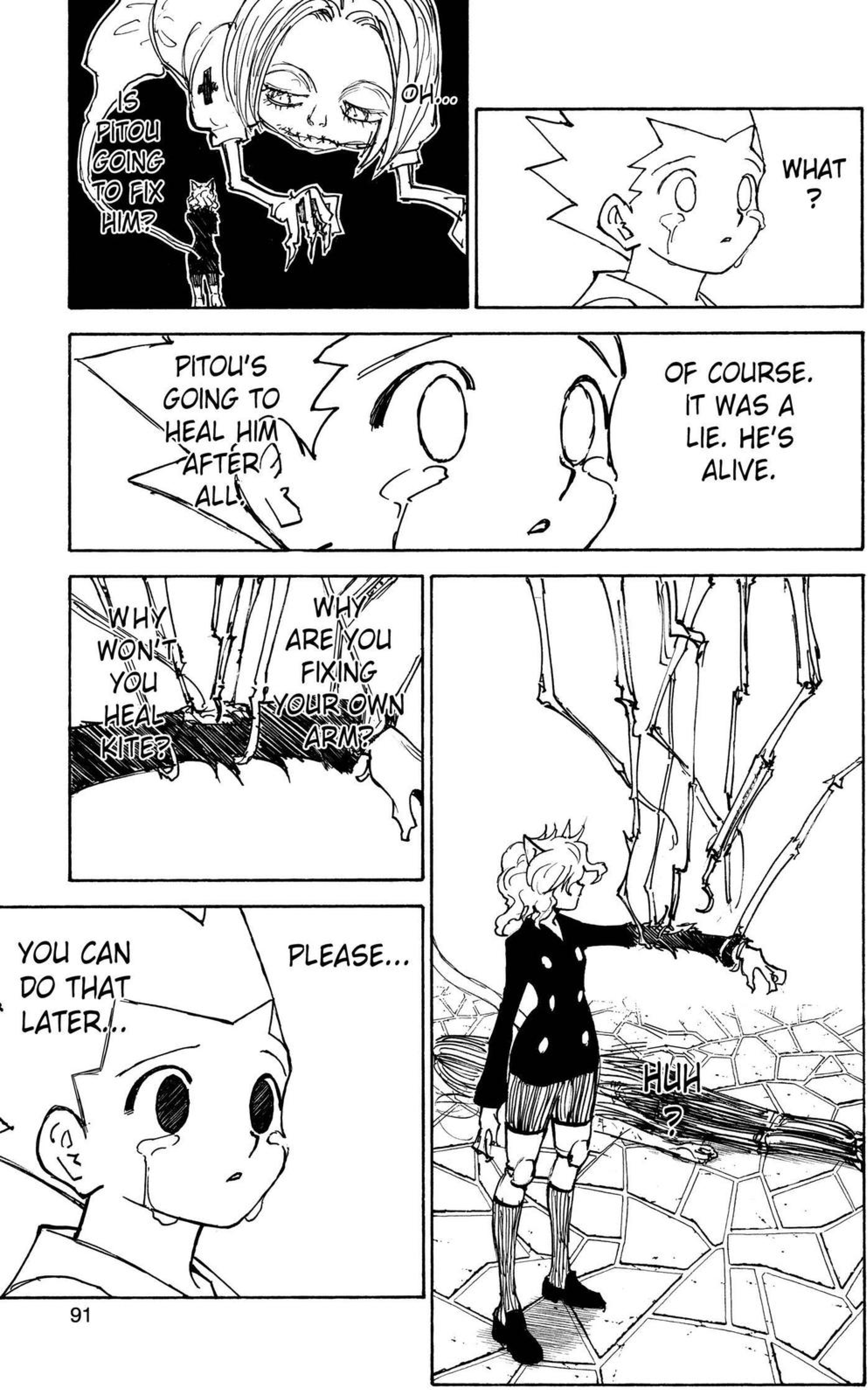
Chapter 305: Sorry

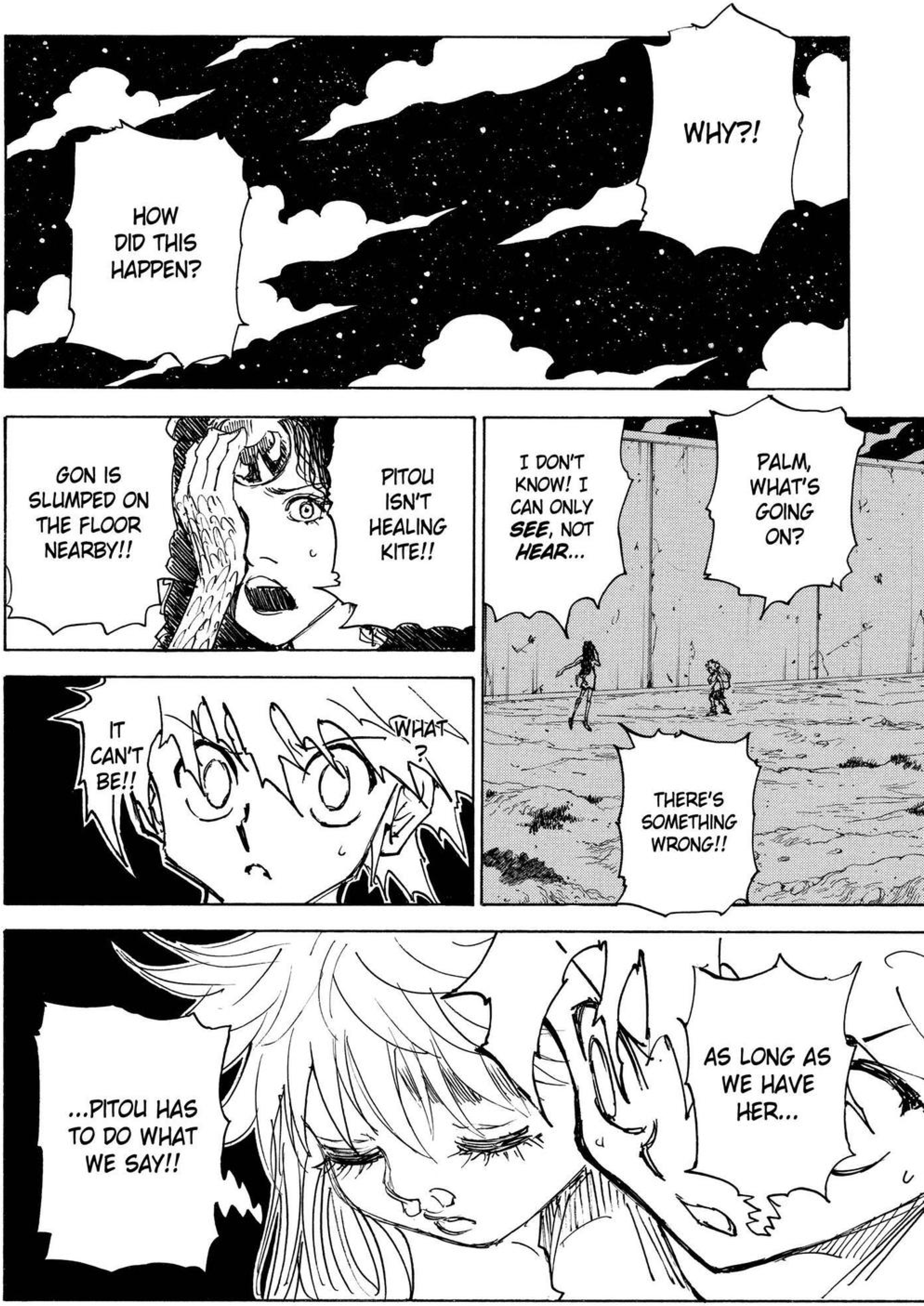

I DID THIS.
I KILLED KITE.

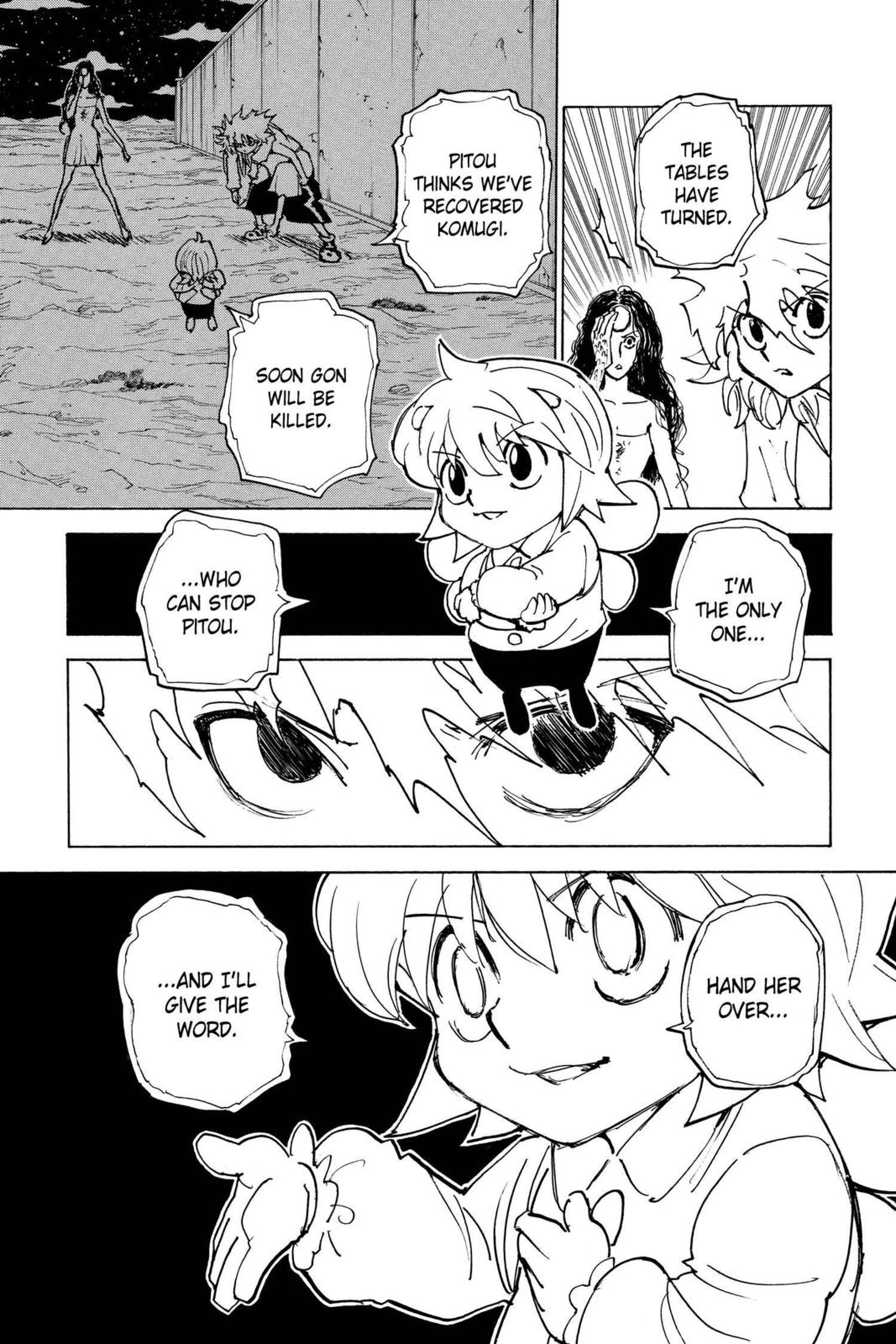

KITE IS GONE...?
HE WOULDN'T HAVE DIED IF I HADN'T BEEN THERE.
NO!!!
PITOU KILLED HIM. NOT ME!!
I HAD TO FOLLOW HIM.
I SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER.
I DIDN'T DO IT!!
IT WAS ME.
I KNEW IT.
NO!!

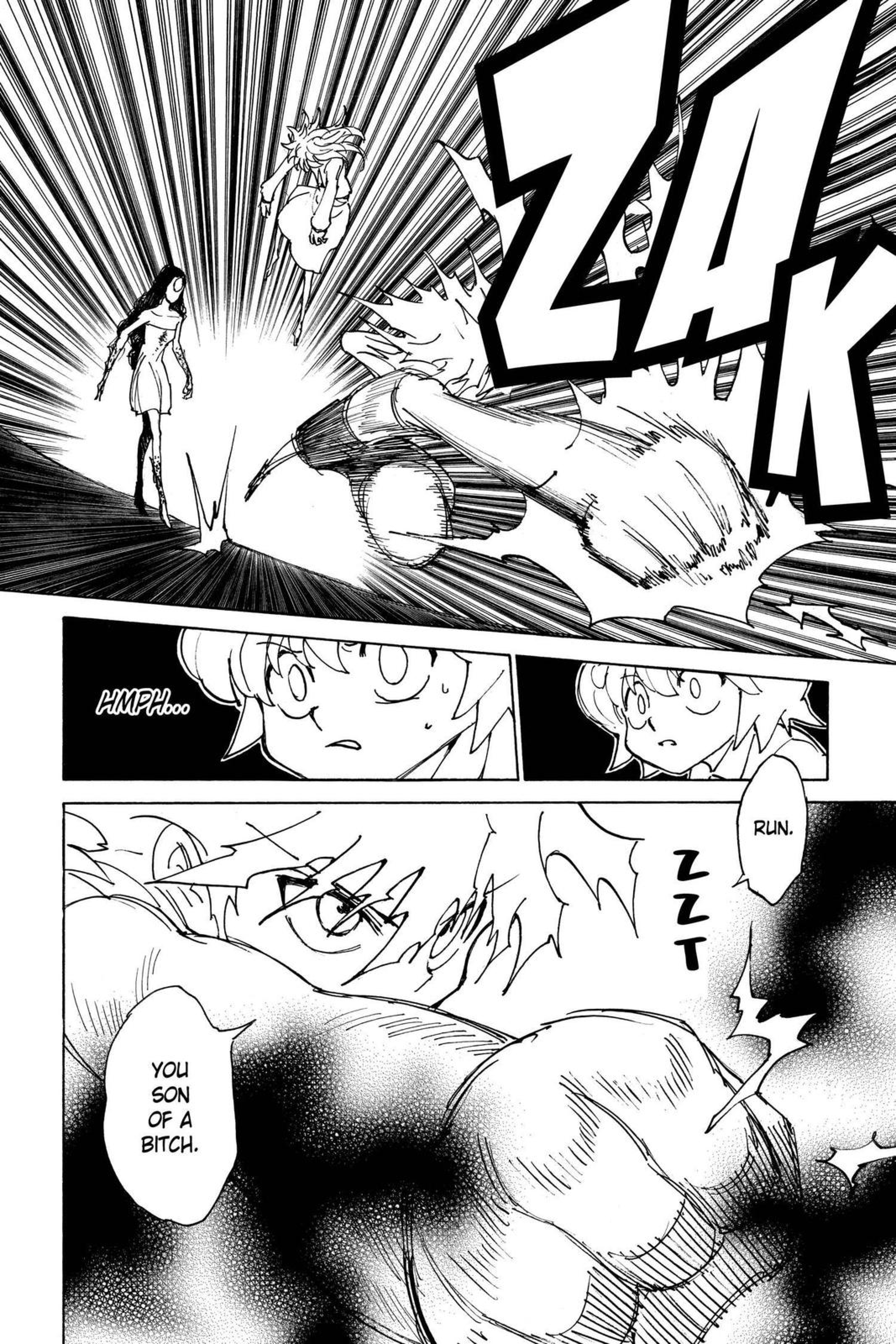

SOMEBODY HELP ME.
KITE... KITE... KITE...
KITE IS DEAD. KITE IS DEAD. KITE IS DEAD. KITE IS DEAD.
SOME-ONE HELP KITE.
IT'S MY FAULT.
PITOU CAN'T FIX HIM?
SOMEONE PLEASE HELP KITE. NO... HE'S BEYOND HELP.
NO!!
IT'S HIS FAULT!!
I KILLED HIM.
NO NO NO NO NO

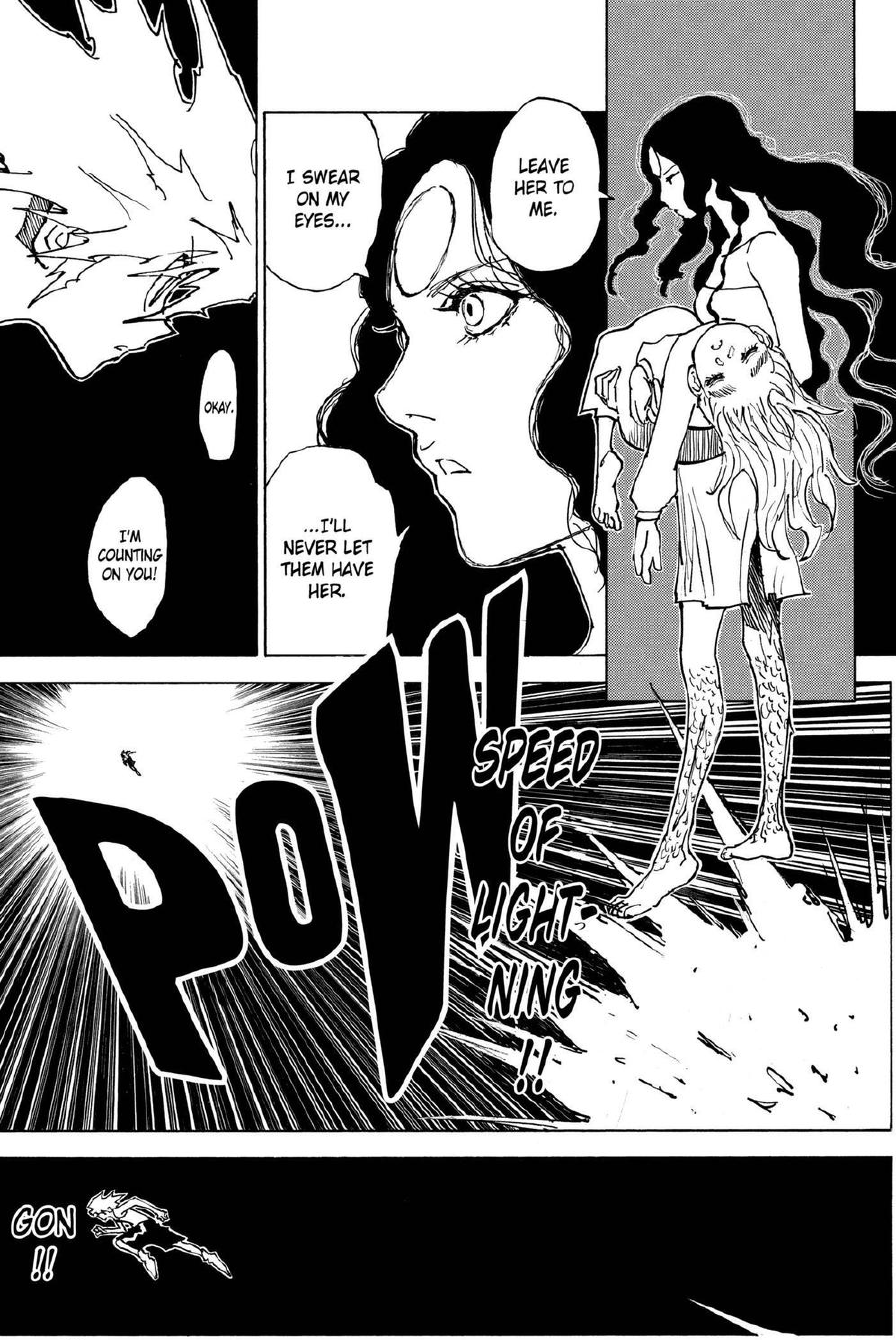

DOCTOR BLYTHE !!
FOOM!!

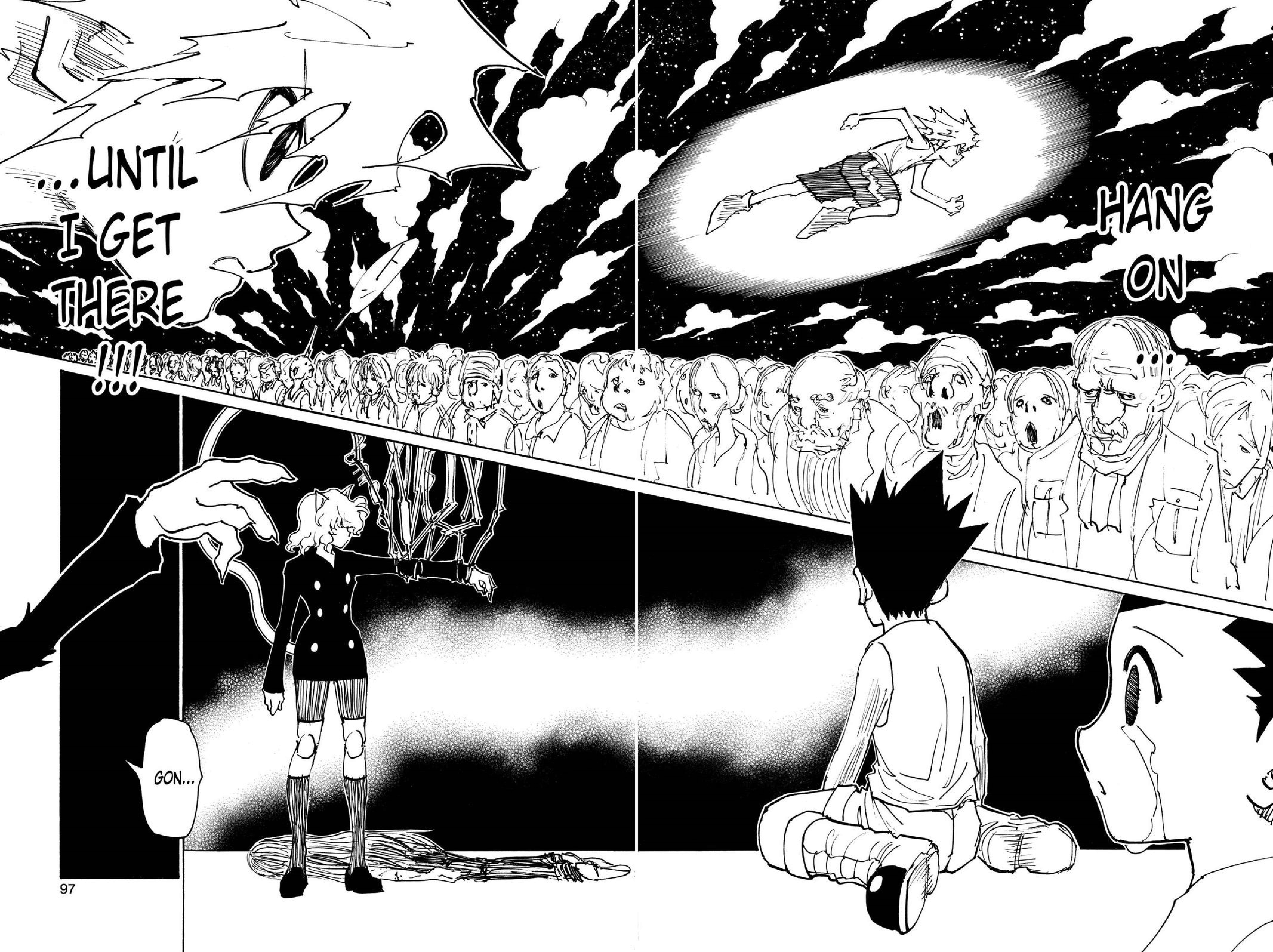

OH...
IS PITOU GOING TO FIX HIM?
WHAT ?
OF COURSE. IT WAS A LIE. HE'S ALIVE.
PITOU'S GOING TO HEAL HIM AFTER ALL.
HUH ?
WHY ARE YOU FIXING YOUR OWN ARM?
WHY WON'T YOU HEAL KITE?
PLEASE...
YOU CAN DO THAT LATER...

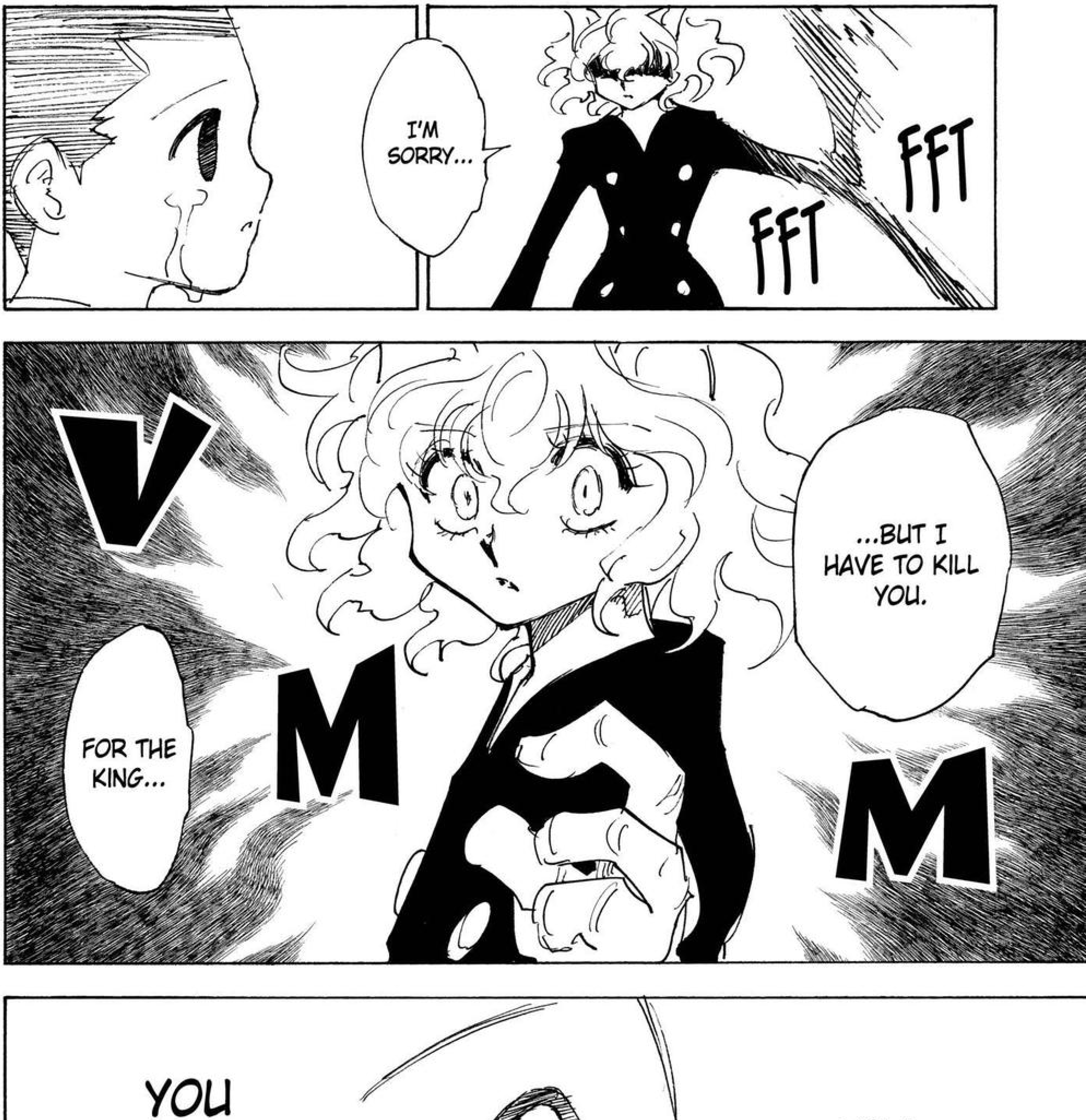

WHY?!
HOW DID THIS HAPPEN?
PALM, WHAT'S GOING ON?
I DON'T KNOW! I CAN ONLY **SEE**, NOT **HEAR**...
THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG!!
PITOU ISN'T HEALING KITE!!
GON IS SLUMPED ON THE FLOOR NEARBY!!
WHAT?
IT CAN'T BE!!
AS LONG AS WE HAVE HER...
...PITOU HAS TO DO WHAT WE SAY!!

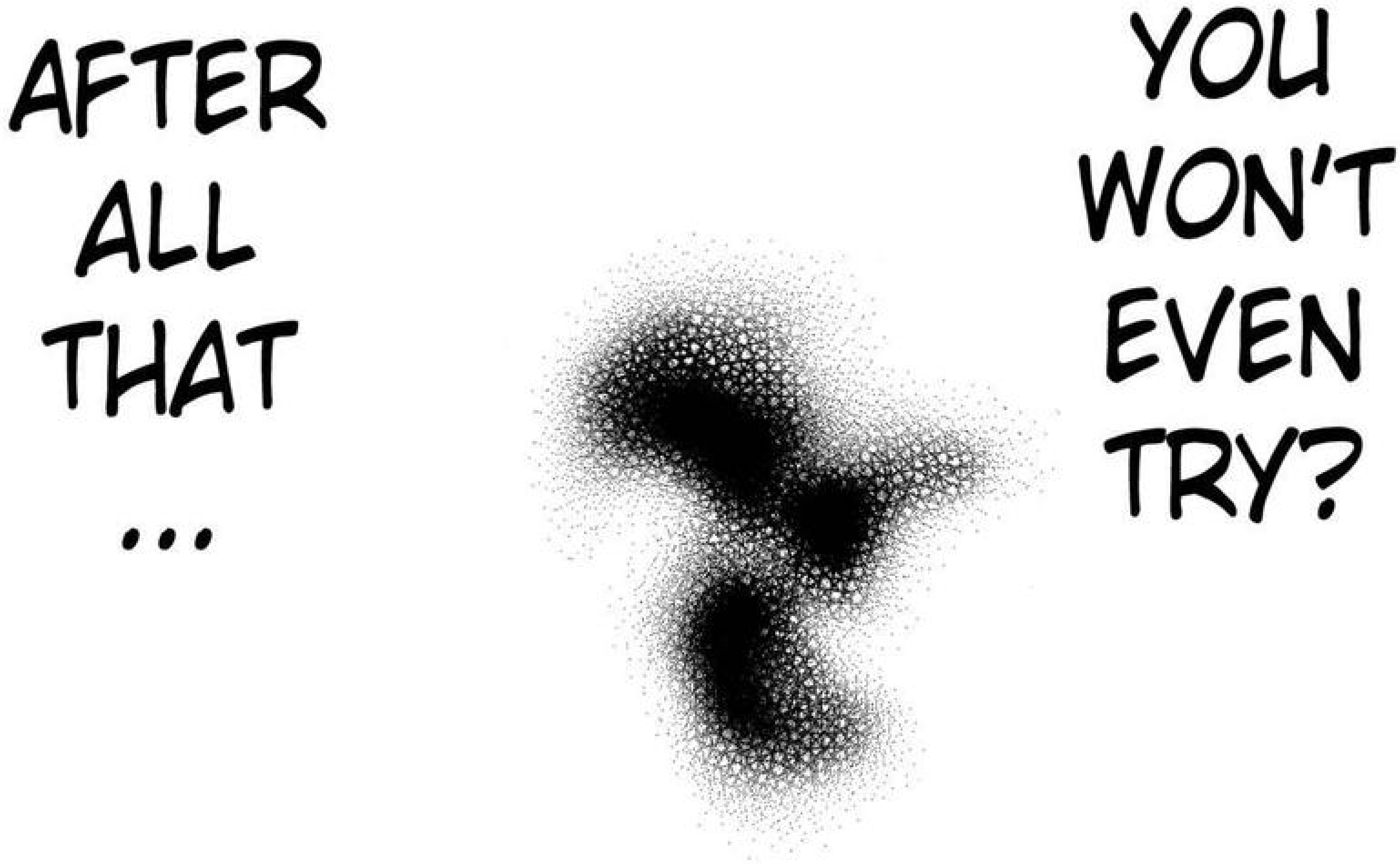

THE TABLES HAVE TURNED.
PITOU THINKS WE'VE RECOVERED KOMUGI.
SOON GON WILL BE KILLED.
I'M THE ONLY ONE...
...WHO CAN STOP PITOU.
HAND HER OVER...
...AND I'LL GIVE THE WORD.

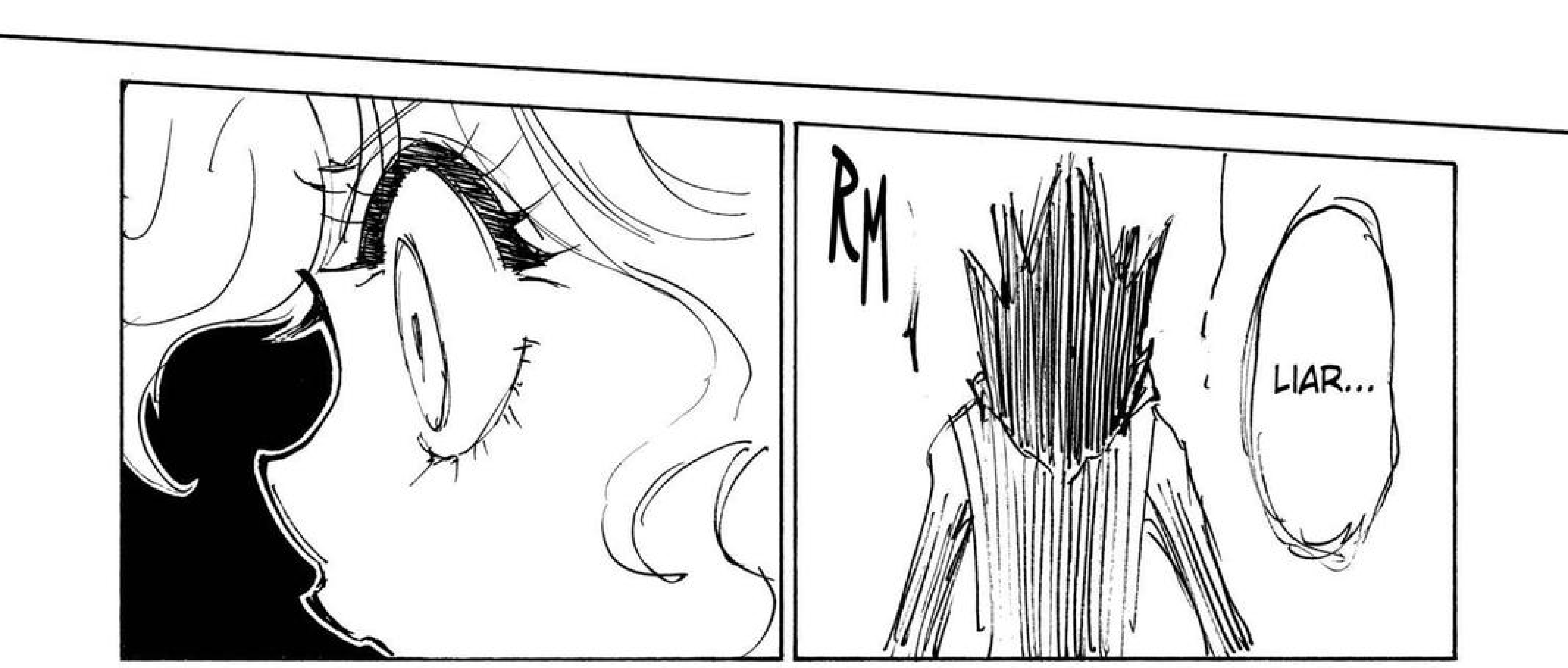

ZAK
HMPH...
RUN.
ZZZT
YOU SON OF A BITCH.

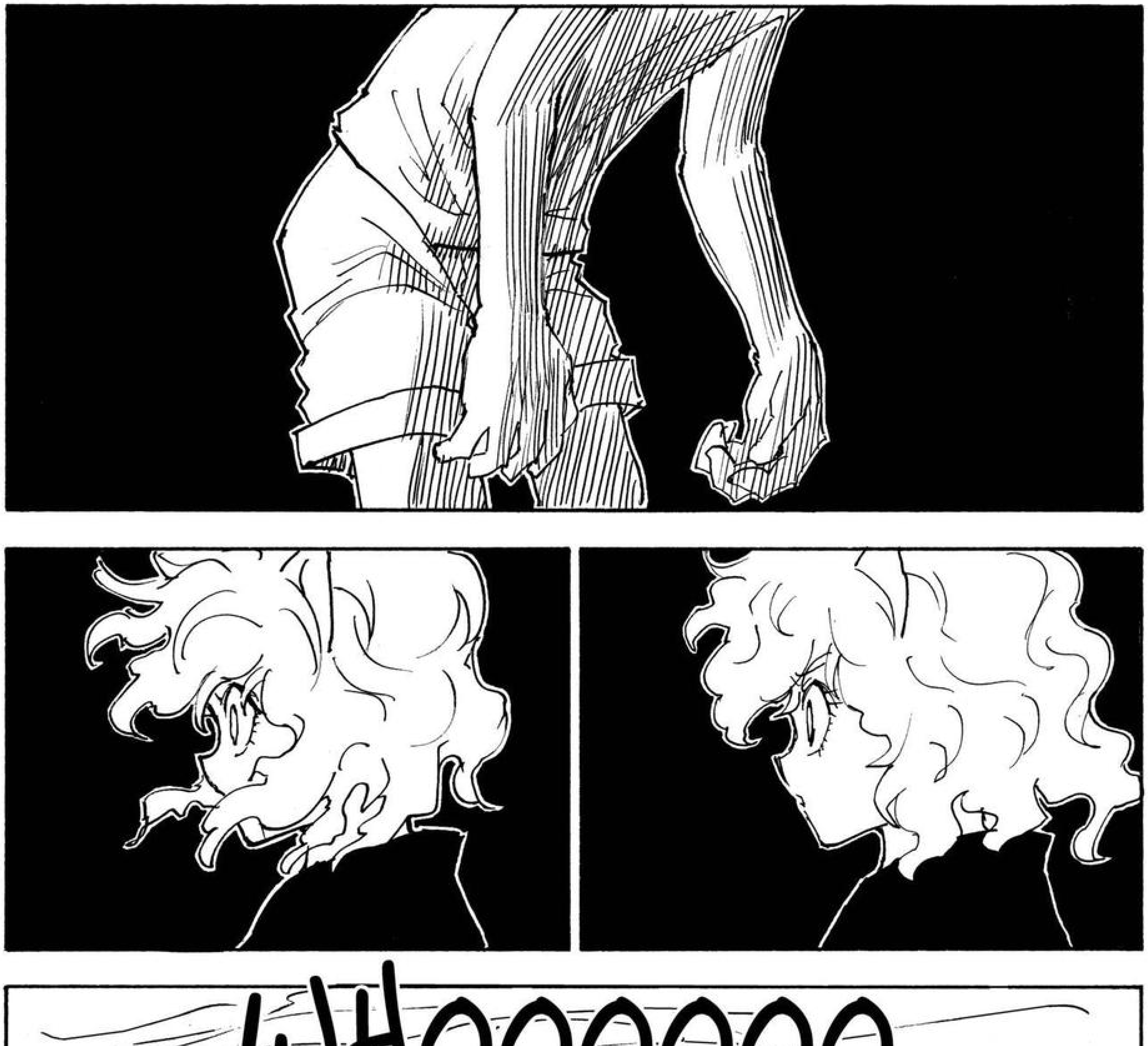

LEAVE HER TO ME.
I SWEAR ON MY EYES...
...I'LL NEVER LET THEM HAVE HER.
OKAY.
I'M COUNTING ON YOU!
POW
SPEED OF LIGHTNING!!
GON!!

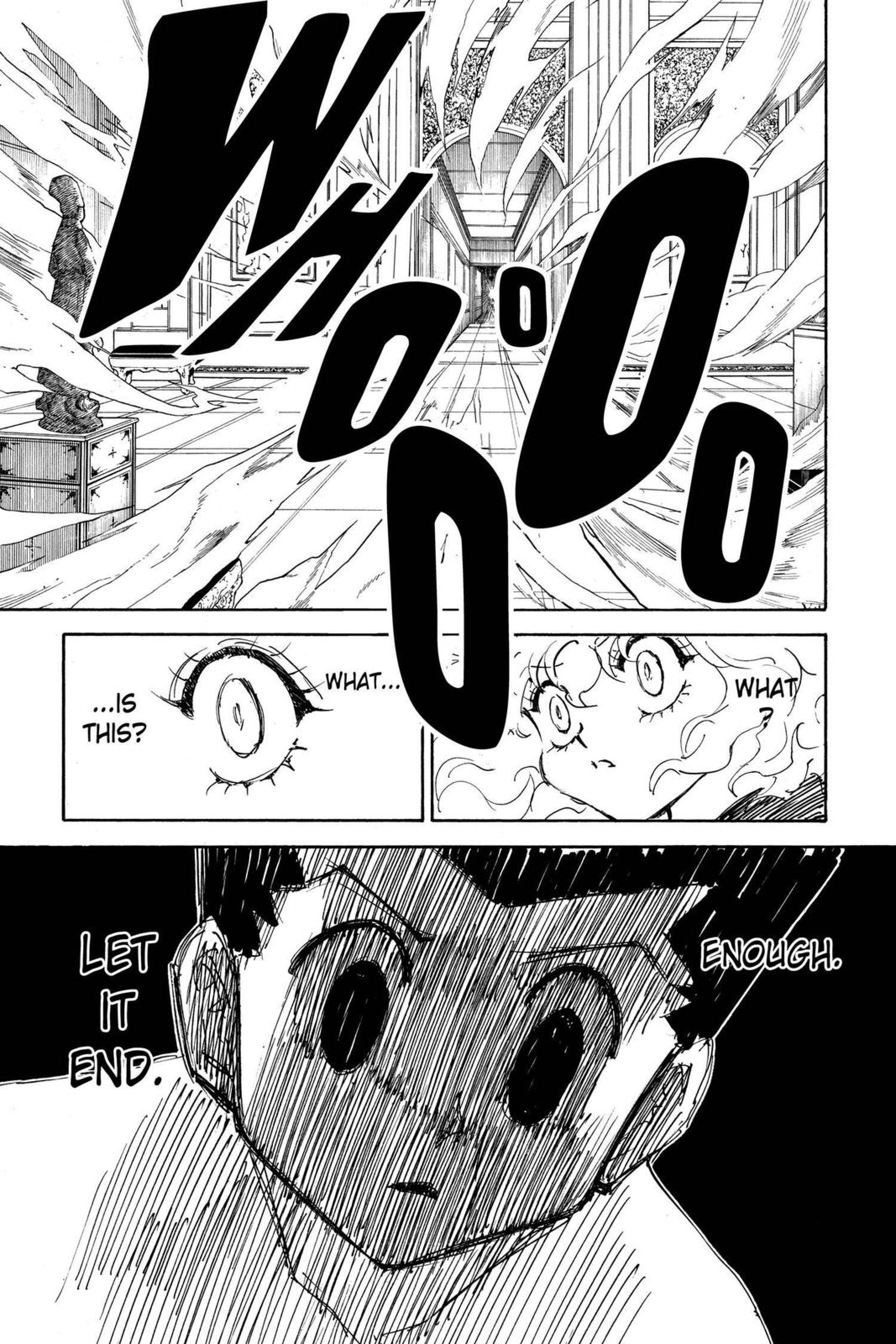

HANG ON
...UNTIL I GET THERE!!!
GON...

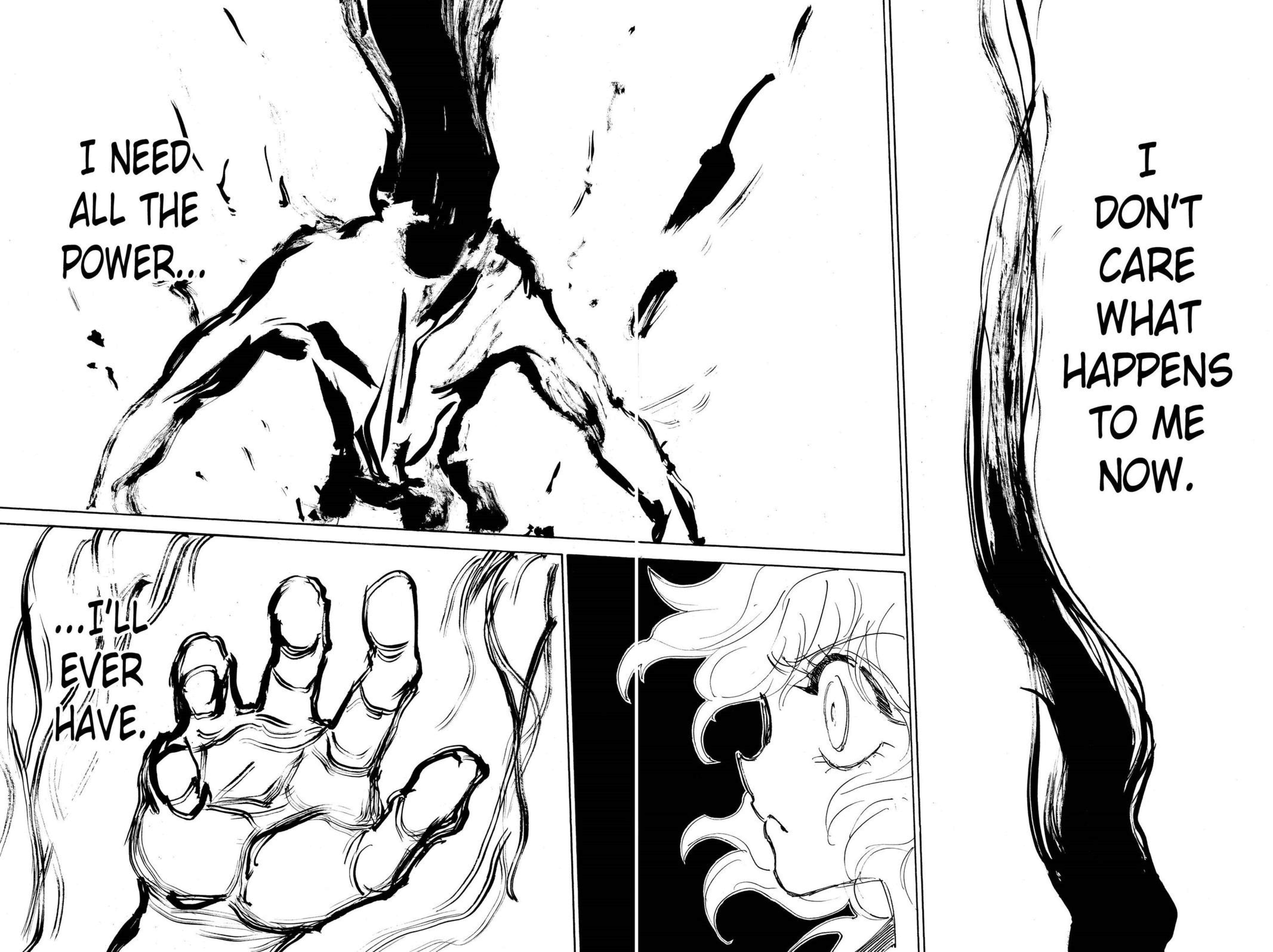

FFT
FFT
I'M SORRY...
...BUT I HAVE TO KILL YOU.
V
M
M
FOR THE KING...
KILL ME?
YOU WON'T HEAL KITE?

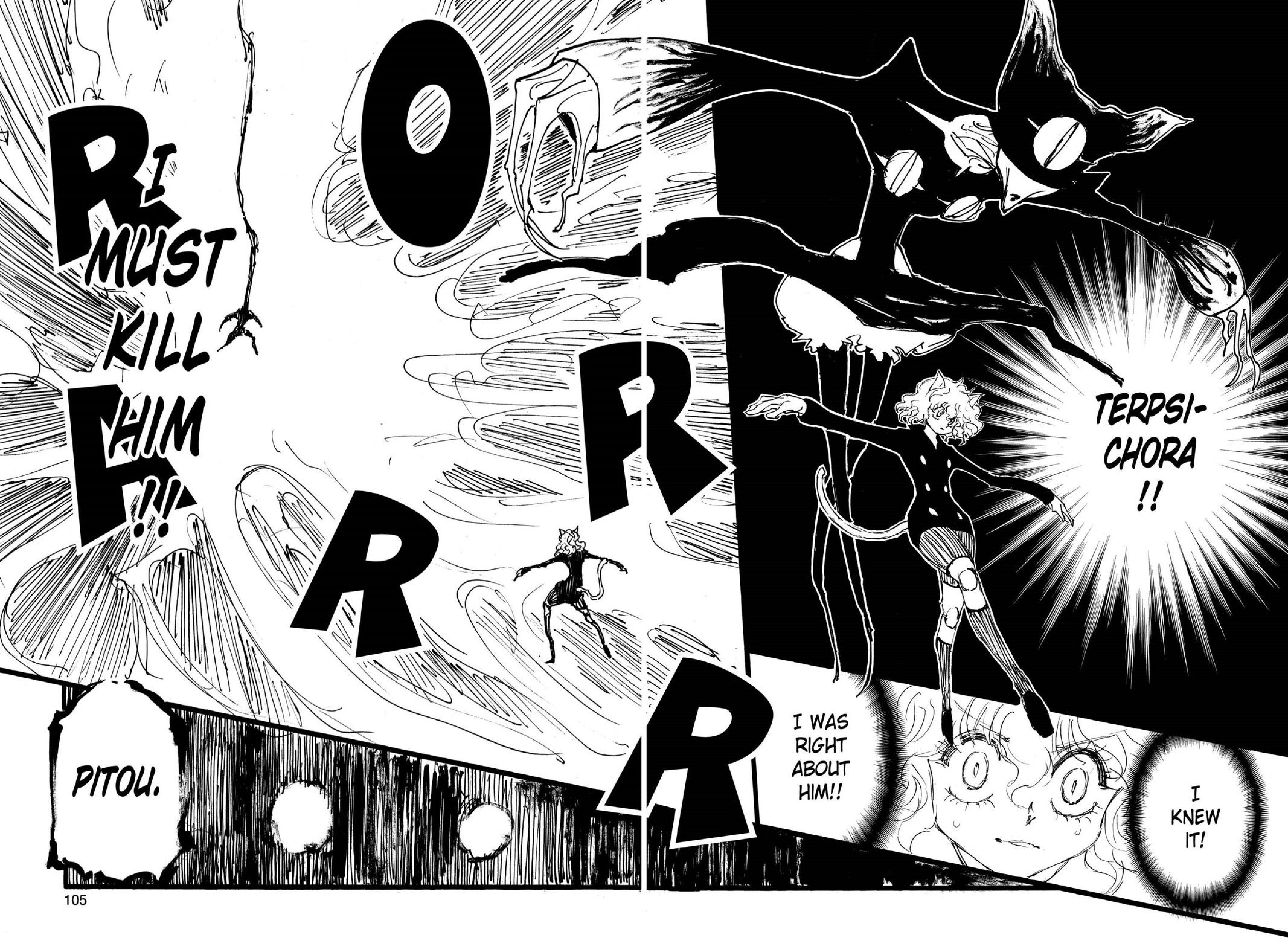

YOU WON'T EVEN TRY?
AFTER ALL THAT ...


RM
LIAR...

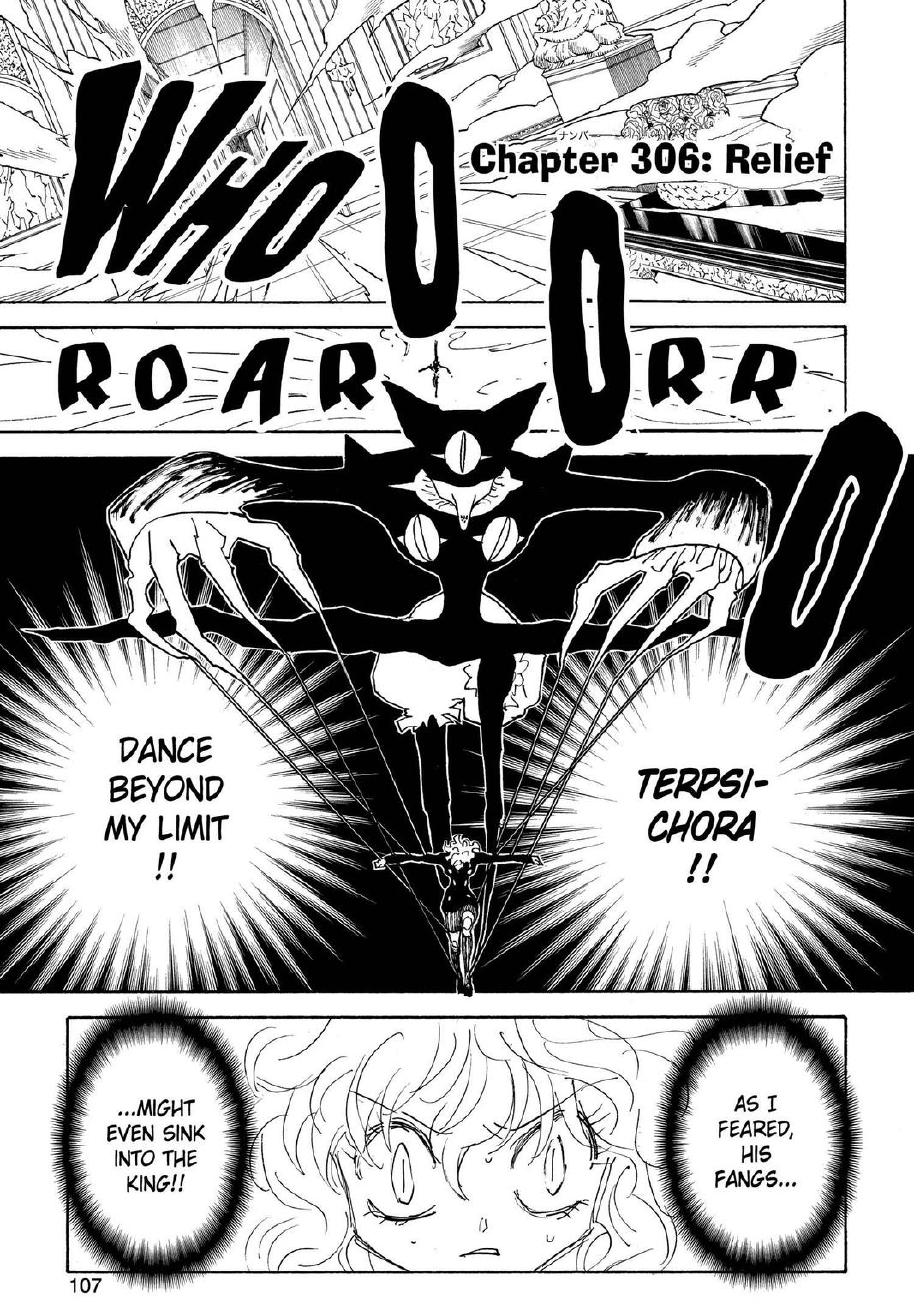

WHOOOOOO
WHOOO
O
FWAP
KRII
WHOOO
WHOOOO

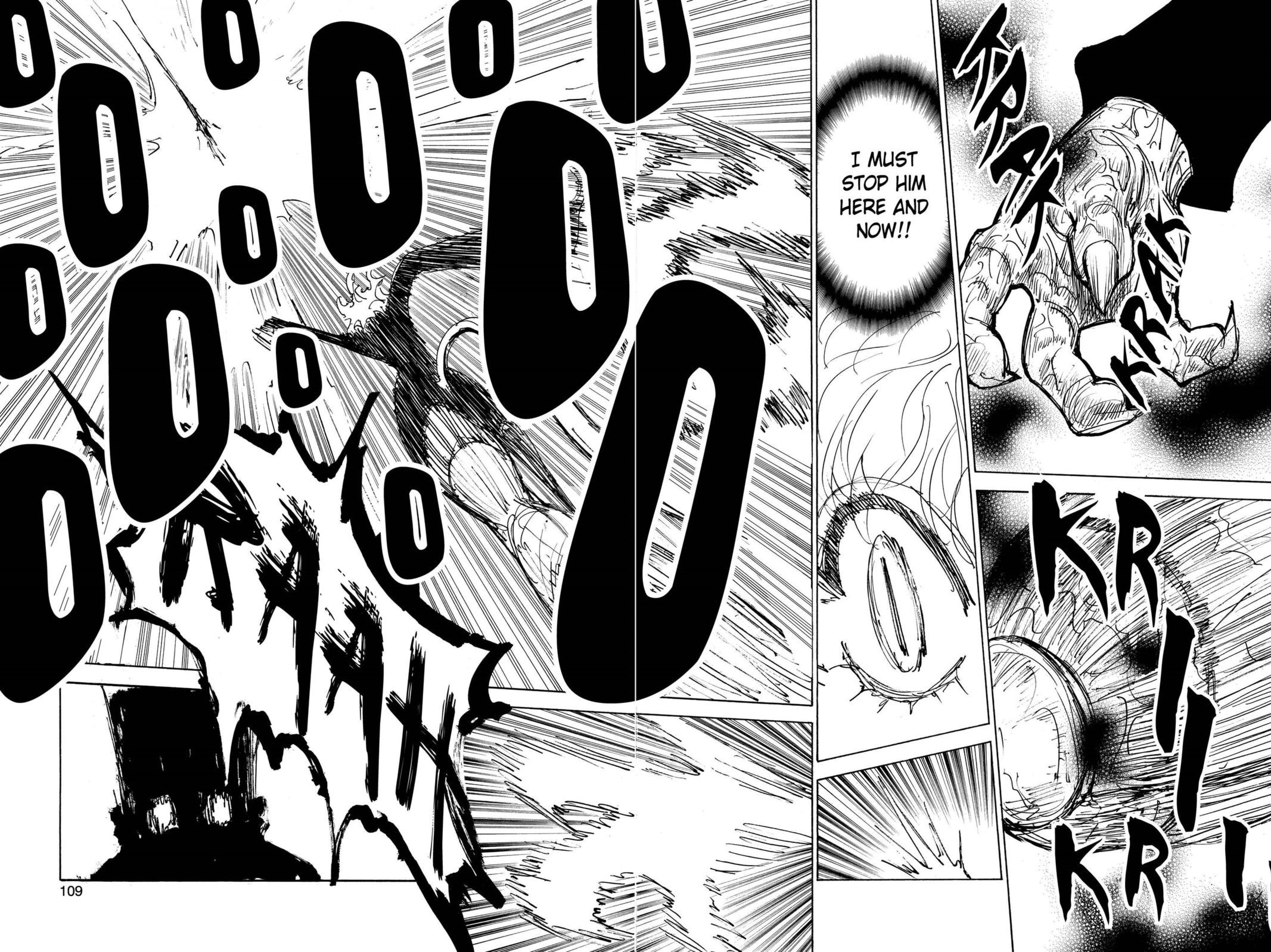

WHOOOOO
WHAT ?
WHAT...
...IS THIS?
ENOUGH.
LET IT END.

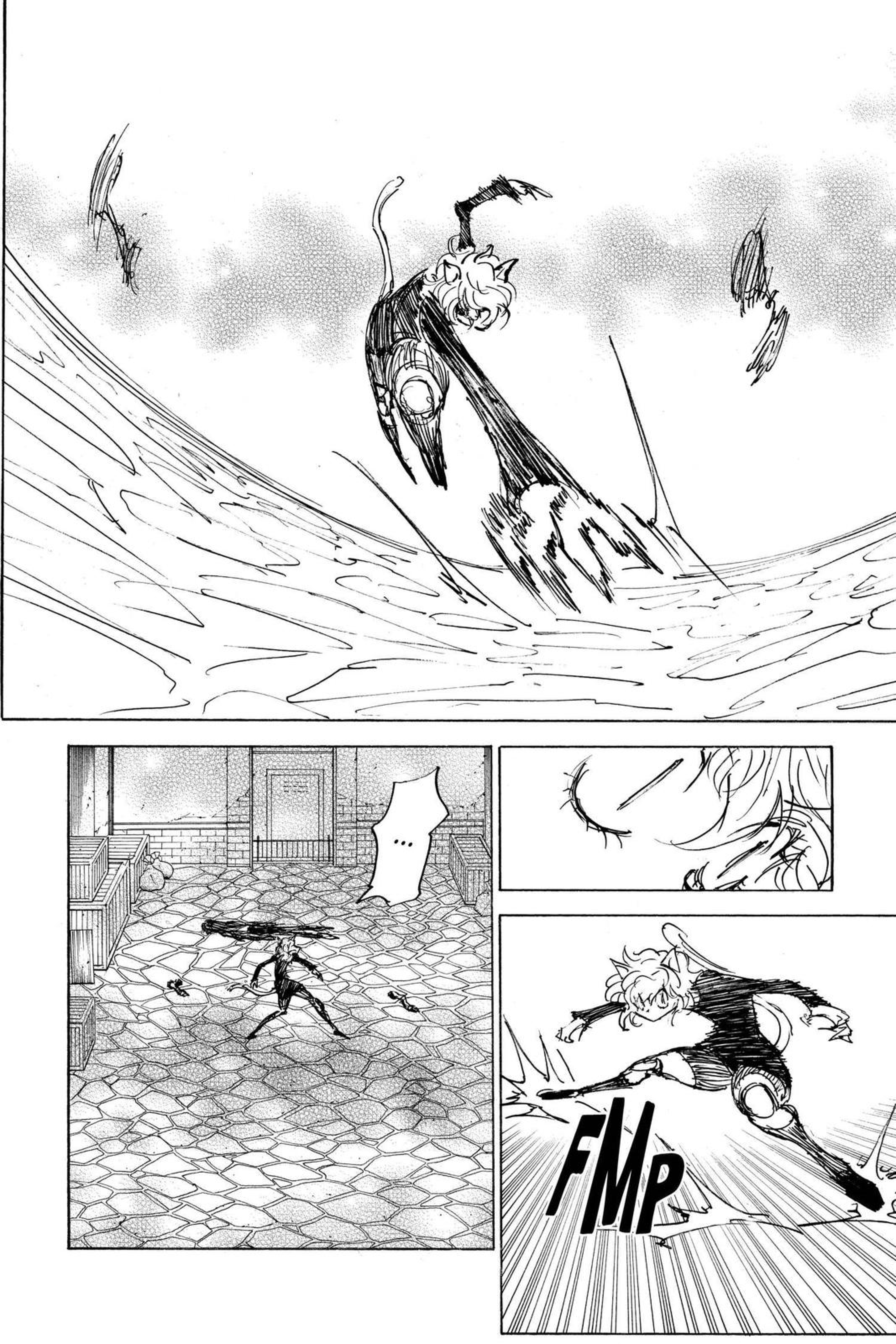

I DON'T CARE WHAT HAPPENS TO ME NOW.
I NEED ALL THE POWER...
...I'LL EVER HAVE.


RROOAAARRR
TERPSICHORA!!
I MUST KILL HIM!!
I WAS RIGHT ABOUT HIM!!
I KNEW IT!
PITOU.

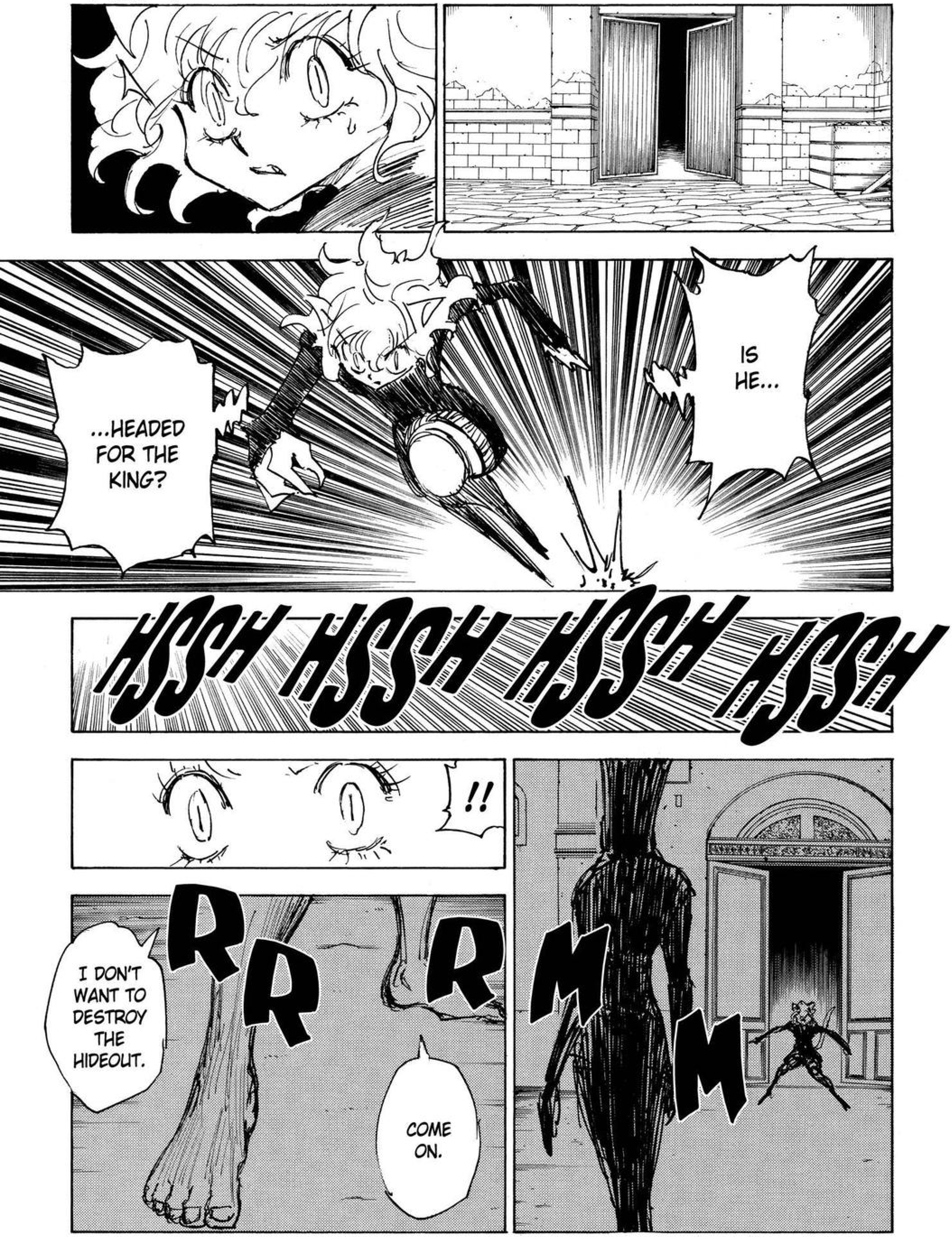
Chapter 306: Relief

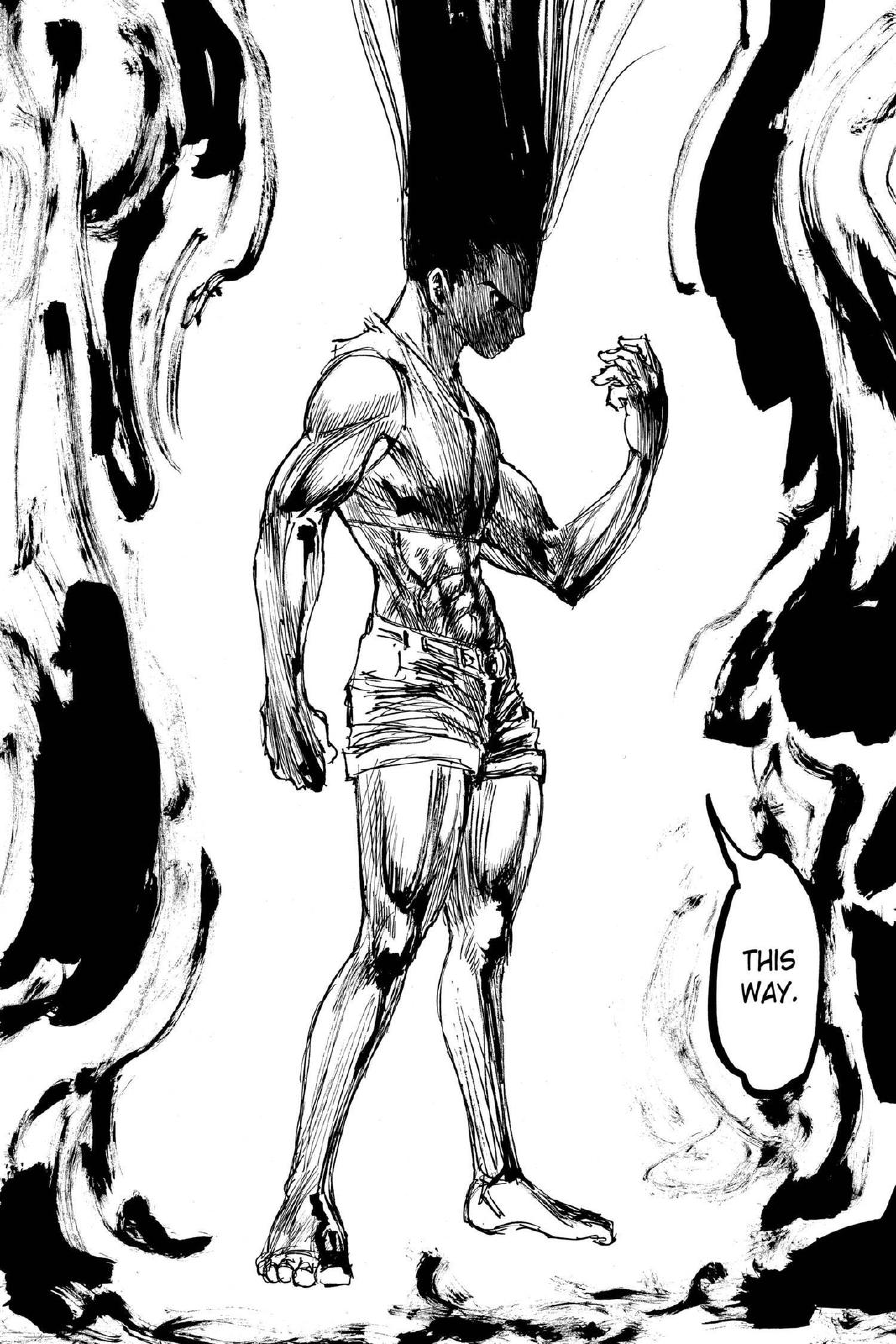

ナンバー
WHOOOOO
ROAR ORRR
TERPSI-CHORA!!
DANCE BEYOND MY LIMIT!!
AS I FEARED, HIS FANGS...
...MIGHT EVEN SINK INTO THE KING!!

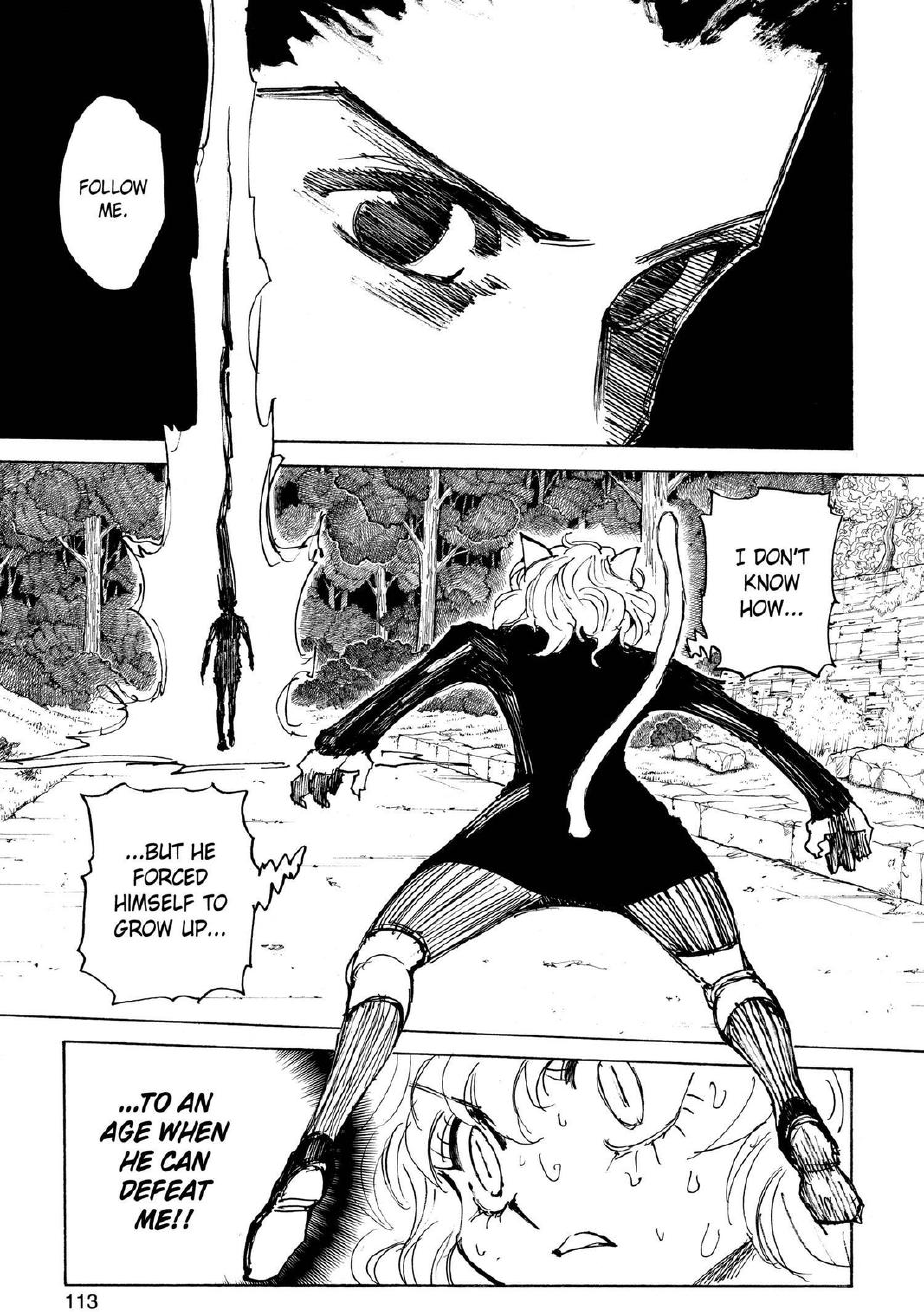

KRAK
KRAK
I MUST STOP HIM HERE AND NOW!!
KRI
KRI
OOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOOO

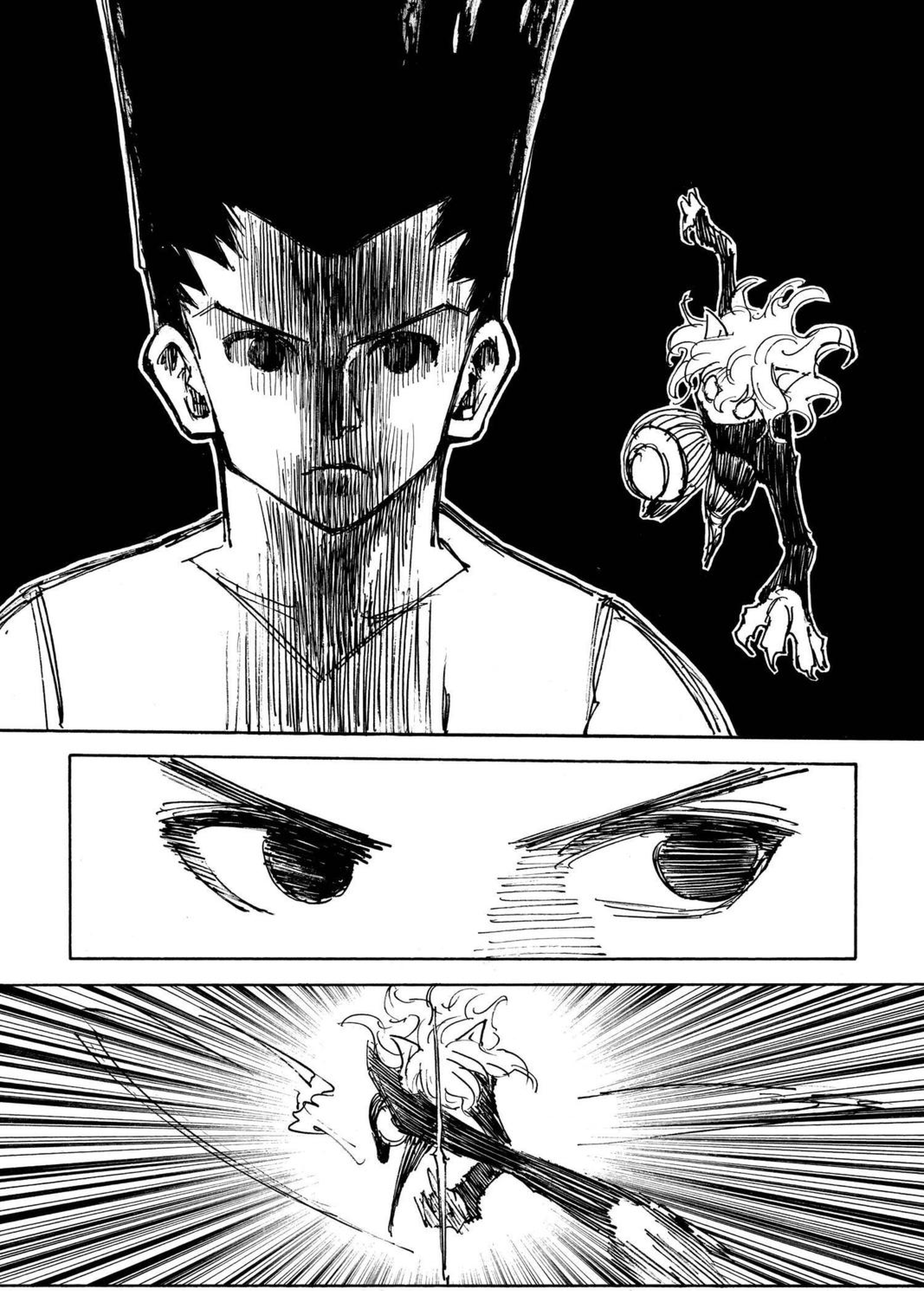

...
FMP

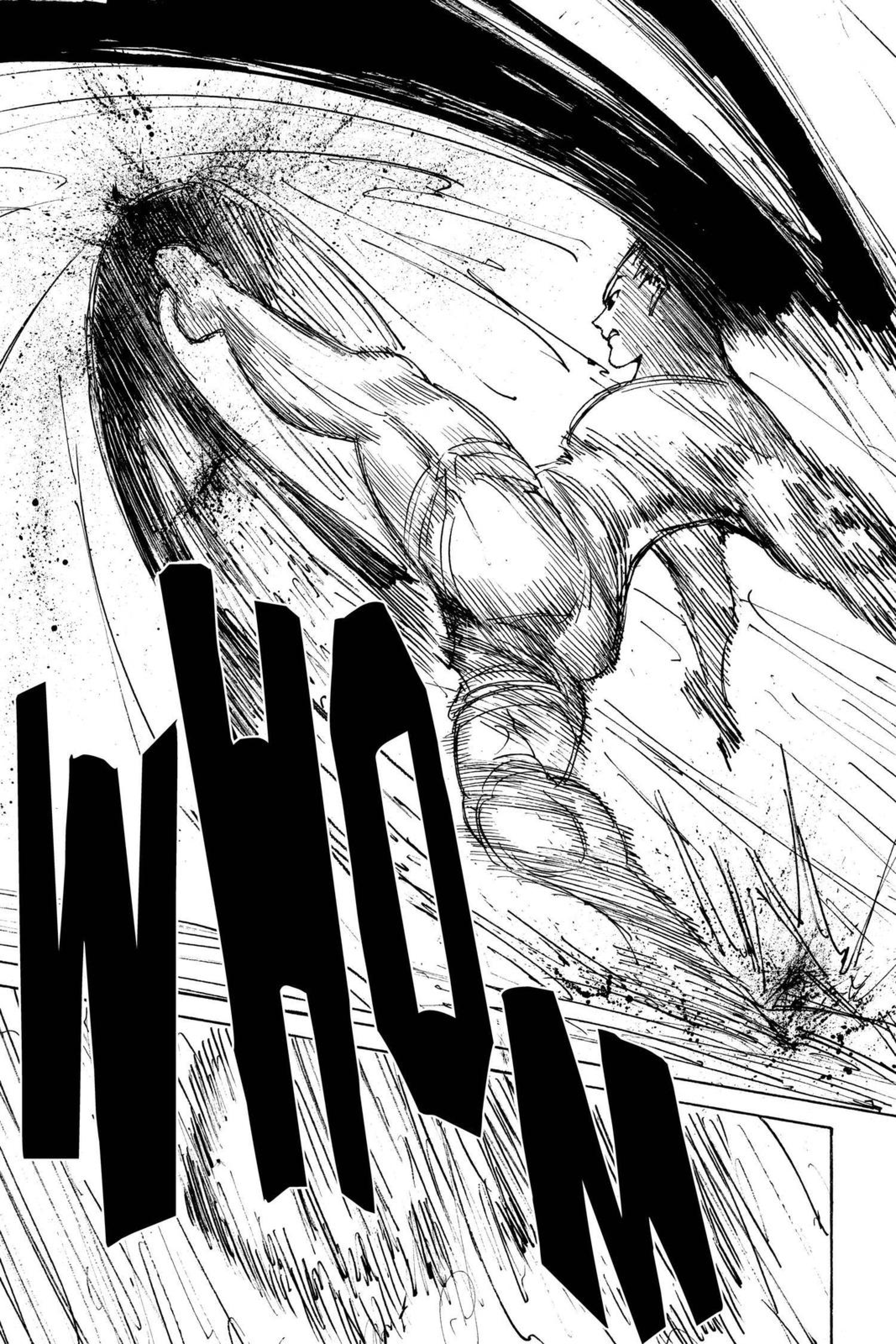
READ THIS WAY

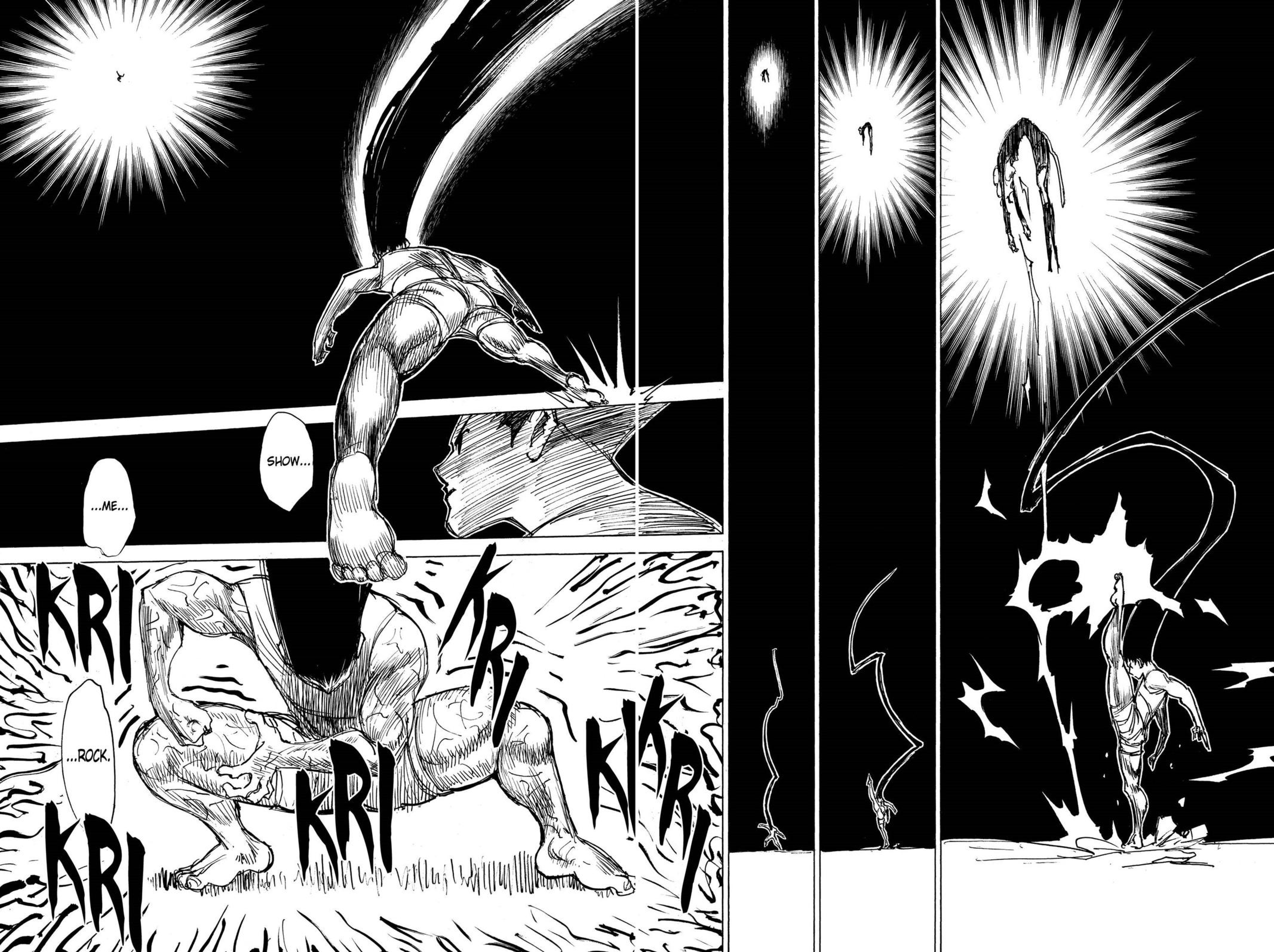

IS HE...
...HEADED FOR THE KING?
HSSH HSSH HSSH HSSH
!!
RRRMMM
I DON'T WANT TO DESTROY THE HIDEOUT.
COME ON.

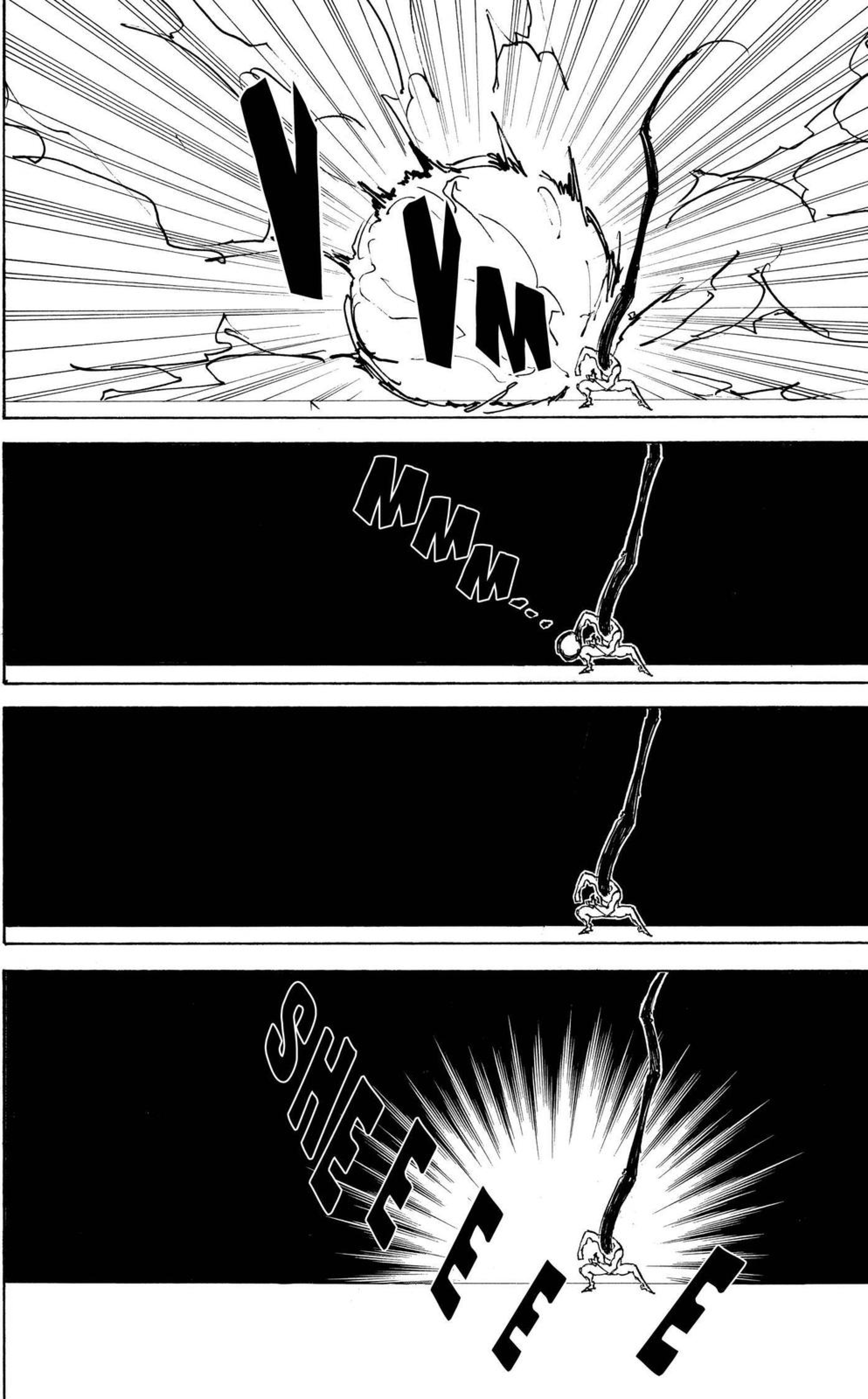

THIS WAY.

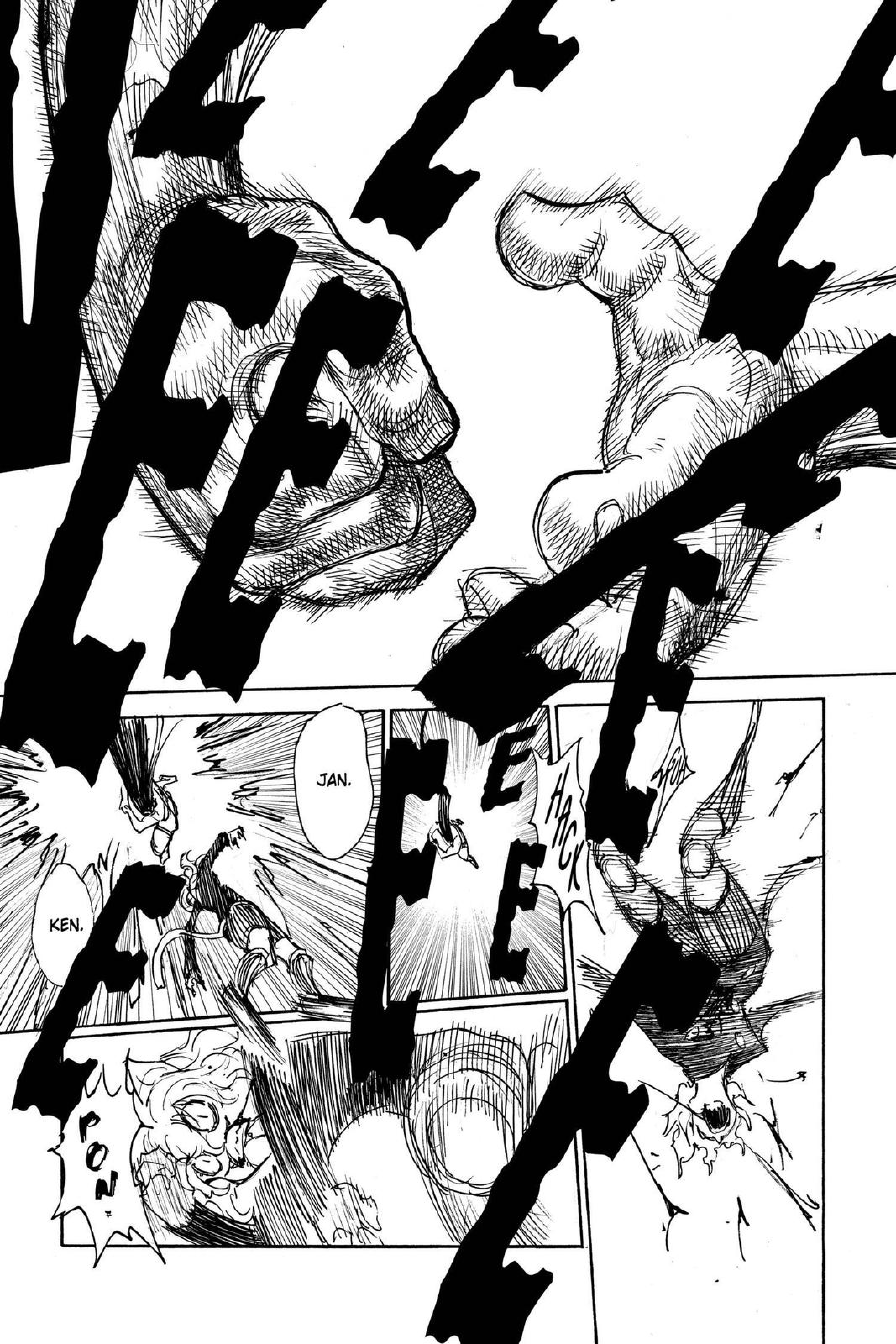

FOLLOW ME.
I DON'T KNOW HOW...
...BUT HE FORCED HIMSELF TO GROW UP...
...TO AN AGE WHEN HE CAN DEFEAT ME!!

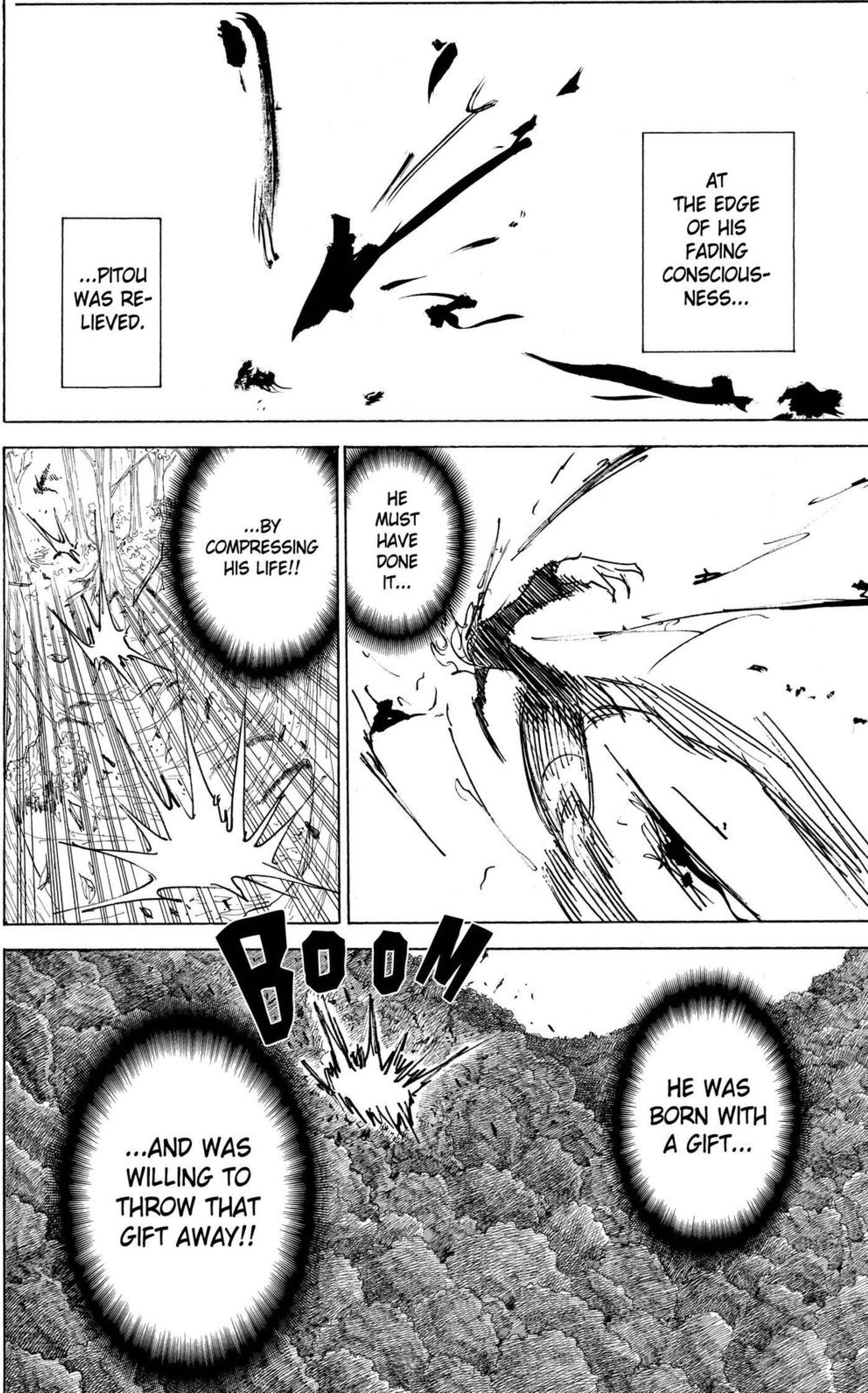


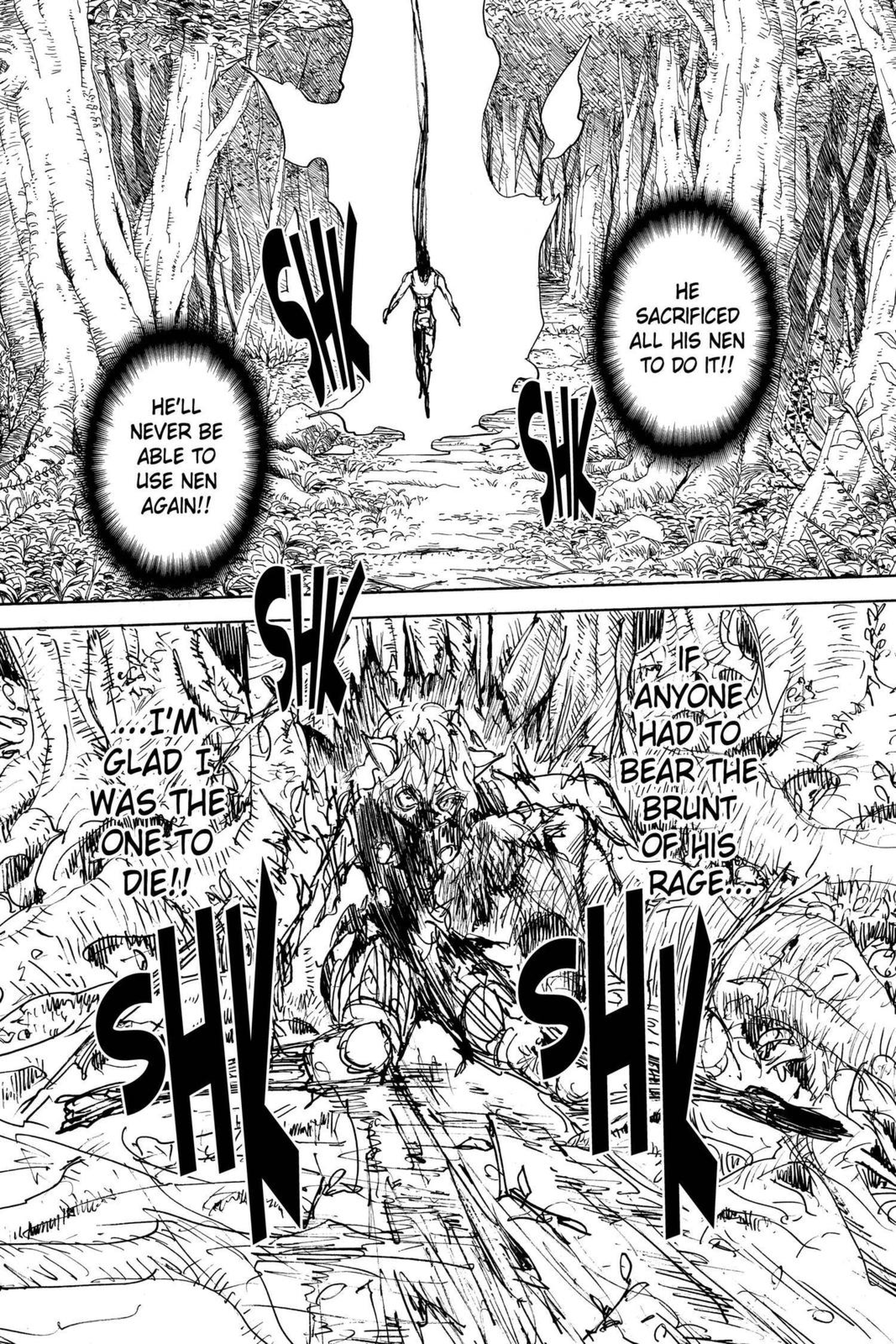

WHOM


SHOW...
...ME...
KRI
KRI
KRI
KRI
KIKRI
...ROCK.
KRI

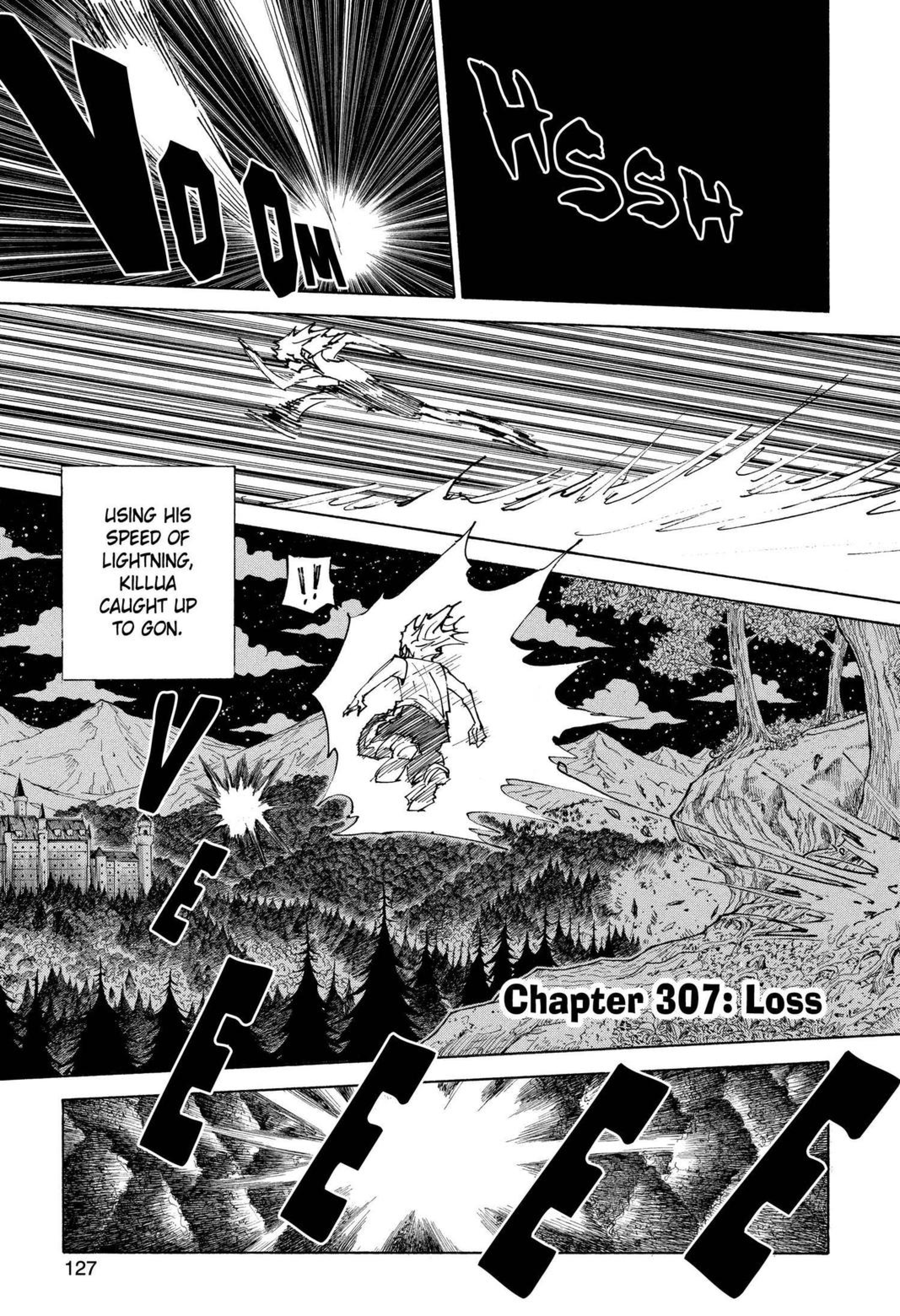

VVM
MMM...
SHEEEEEE

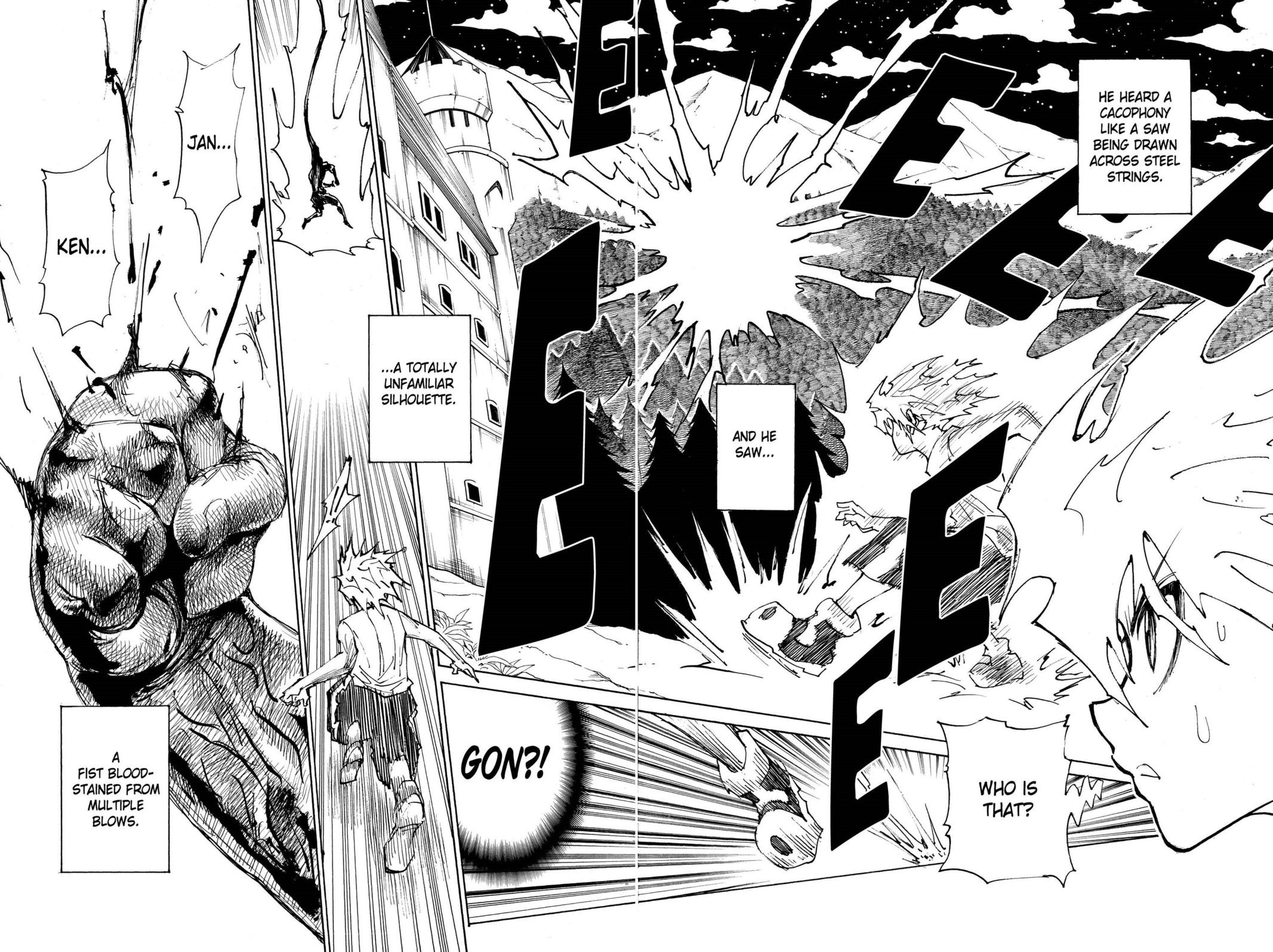

EEEEEEE
HACK
EEE
JAN.
KEN.
POW!

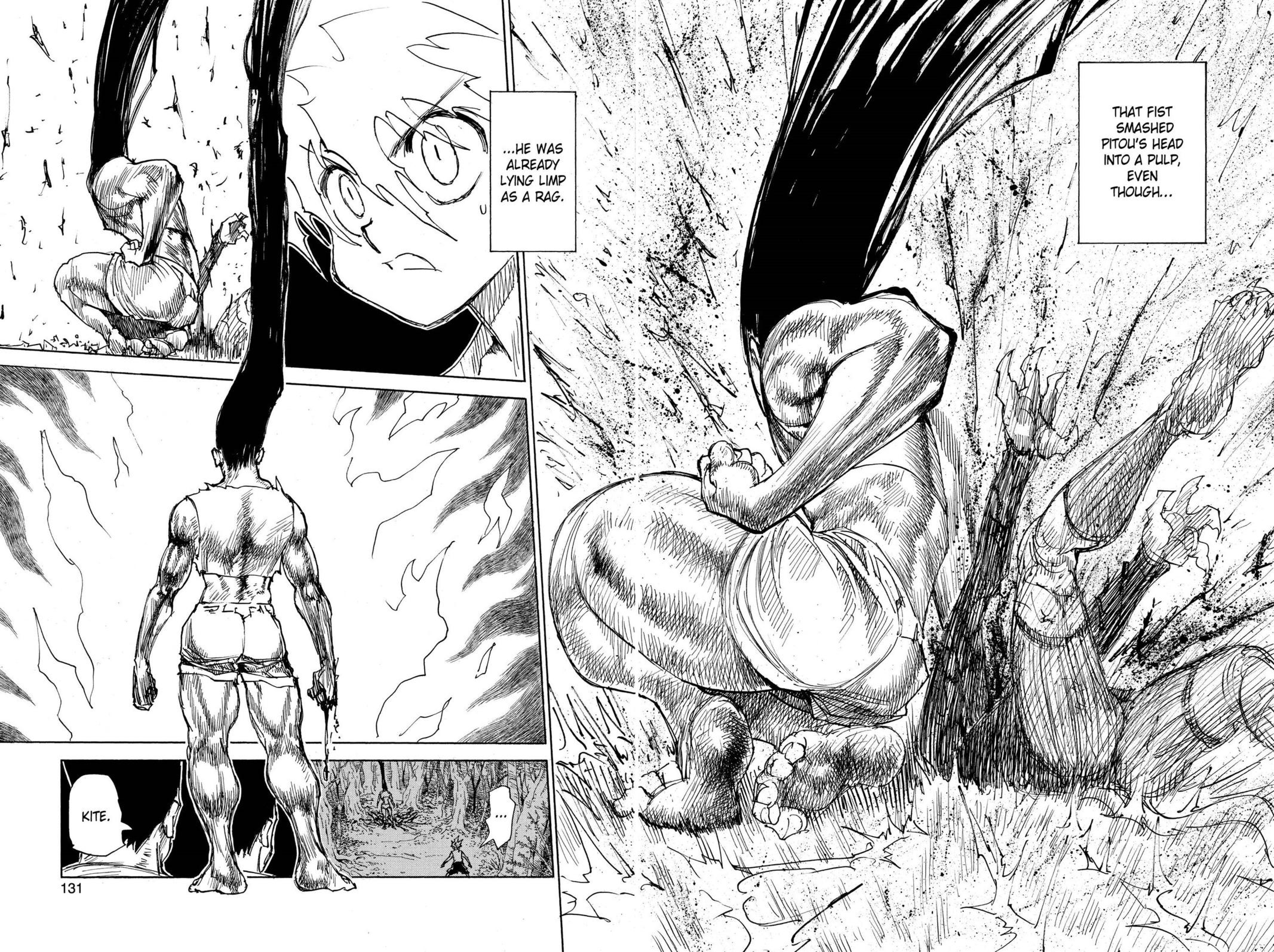

AT THE EDGE OF HIS FADING CONSCIOUSNESS...
...PITOU WAS RELIEVED.
HE MUST HAVE DONE IT...
...BY COMPRESSING HIS LIFE!!
BOOM
HE WAS BORN WITH A GIFT...
...AND WAS WILLING TO THROW THAT GIFT AWAY!!

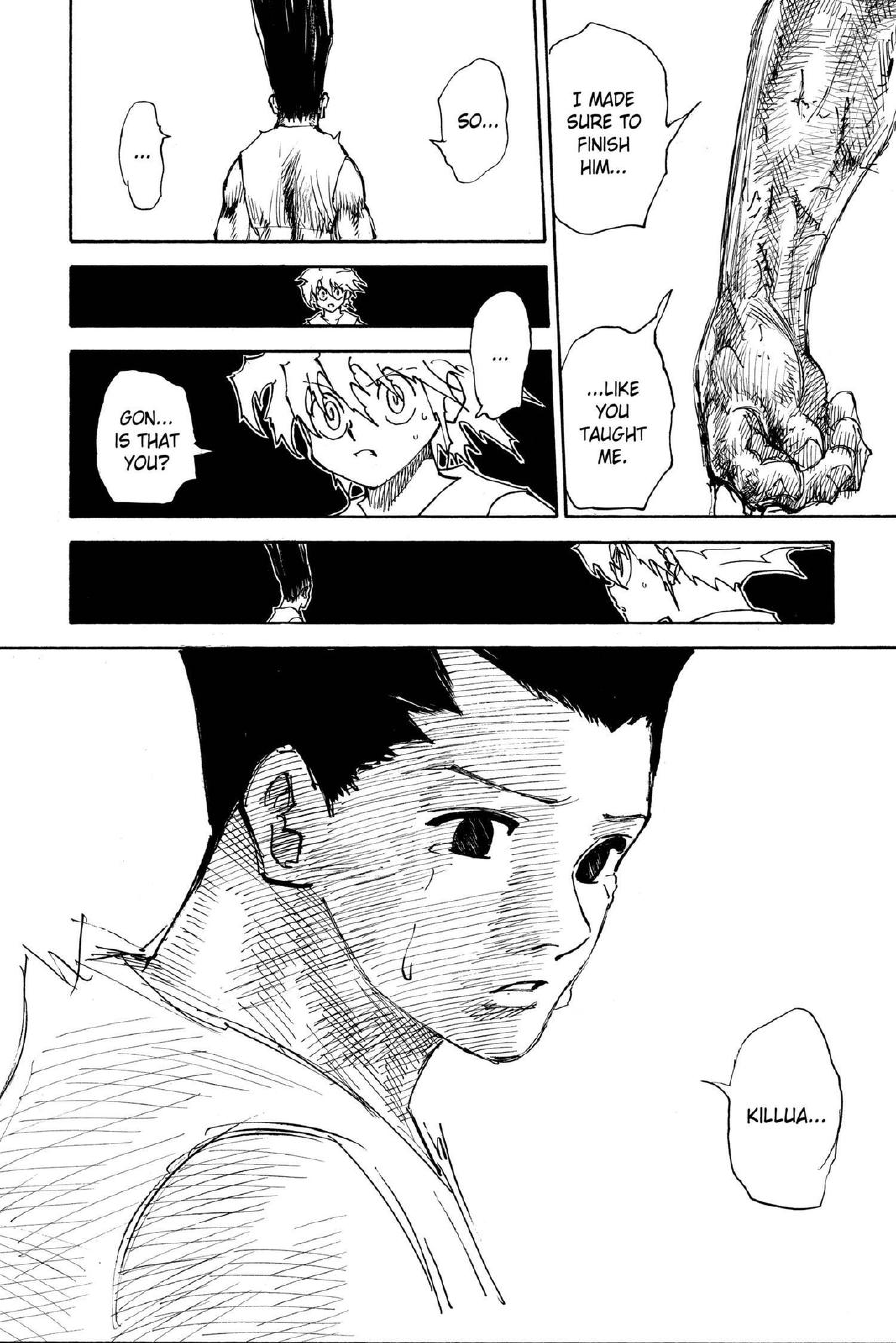

HE SACRIFICED ALL HIS NEN TO DO IT!!
SHK
SHK
HE'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO USE NEN AGAIN!!
SHK
IF ANYONE HAD TO BEAR THE BRUNT OF HIS RAGE...
...I'M GLAD I WAS THE ONE TO DIE!!
SHK
SHK

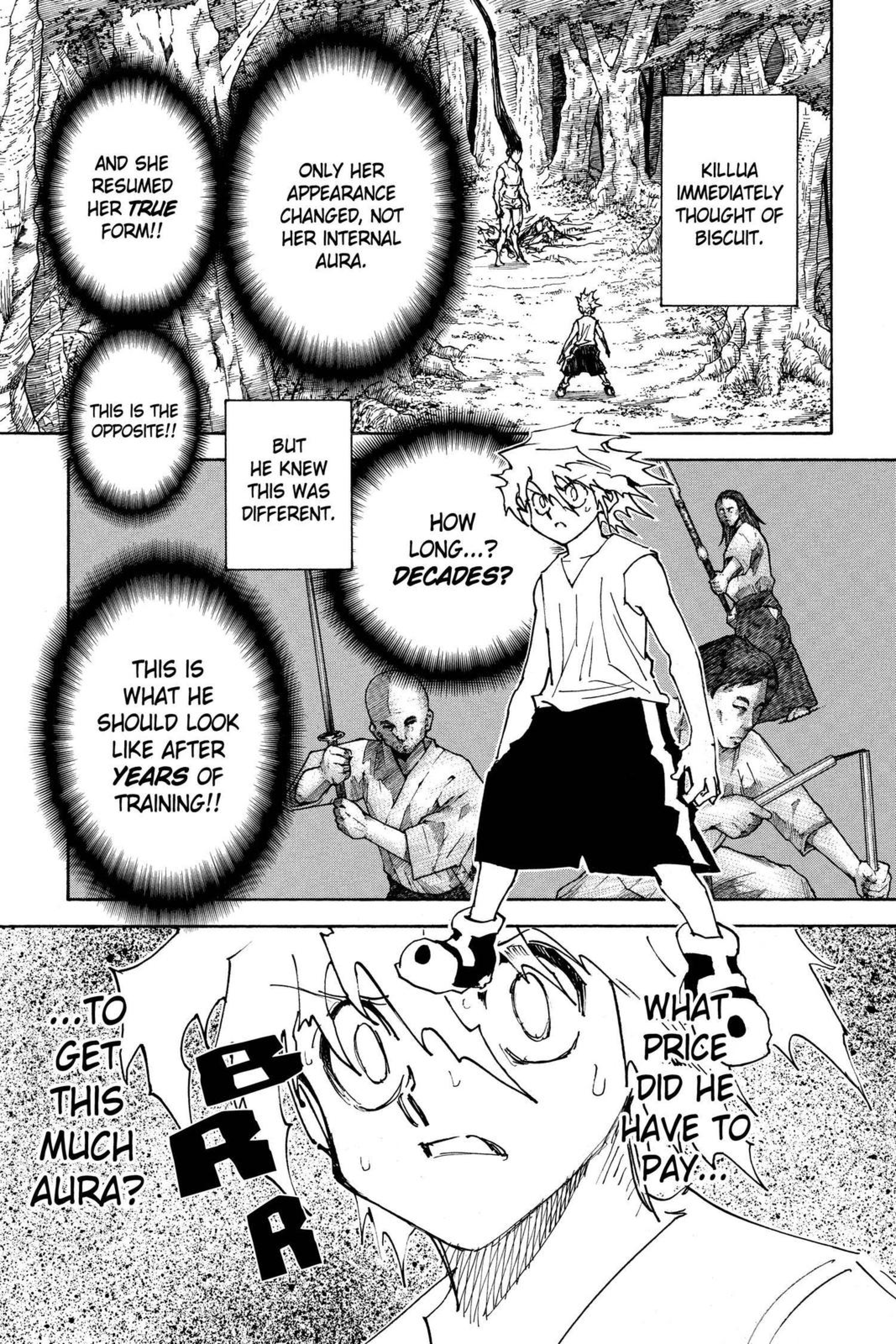
Chapter 307: Loss

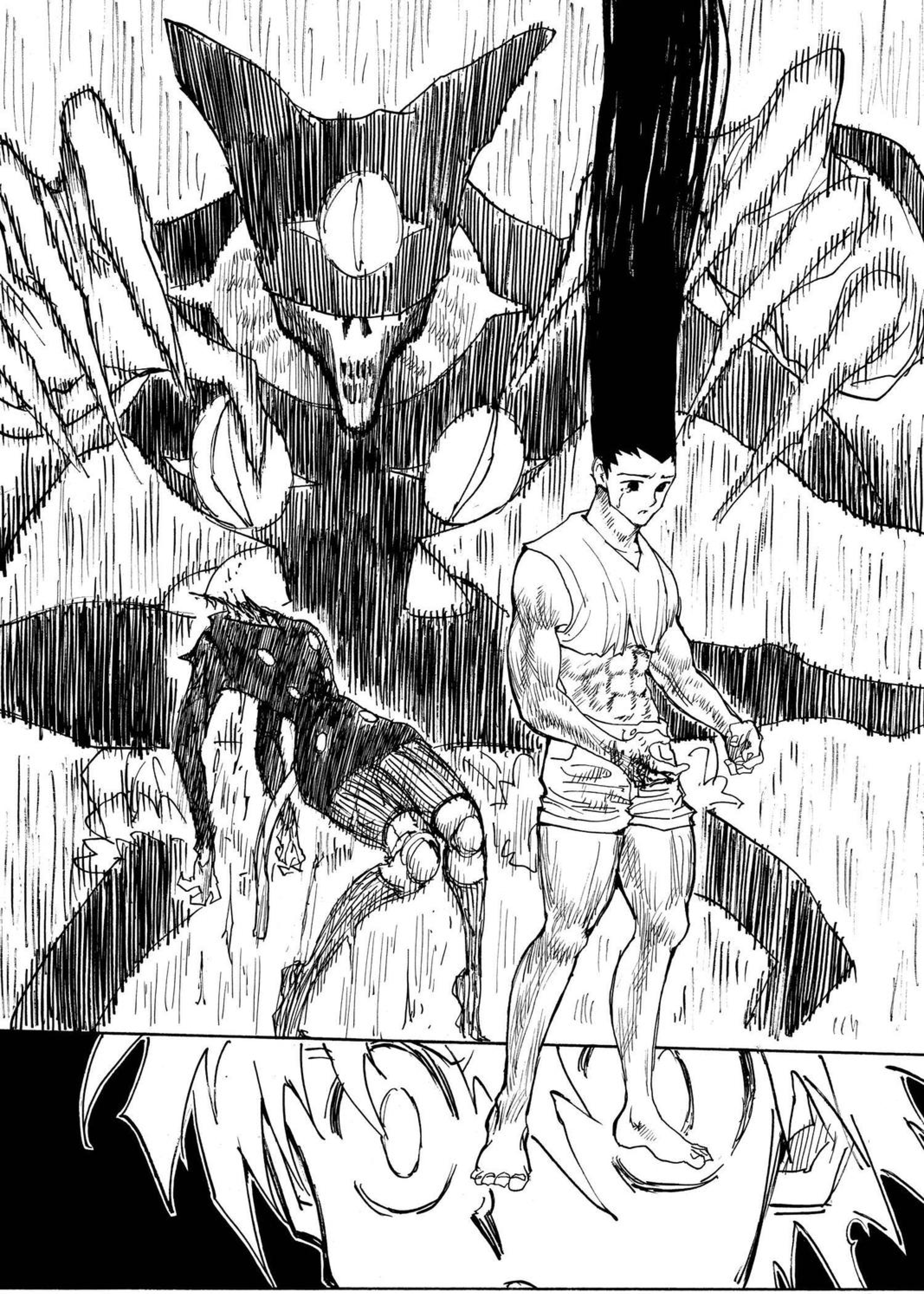

HSSH
VROOM
USING HIS SPEED OF LIGHTNING, KILLUA CAUGHT UP TO GON.
!!
VEEEEE

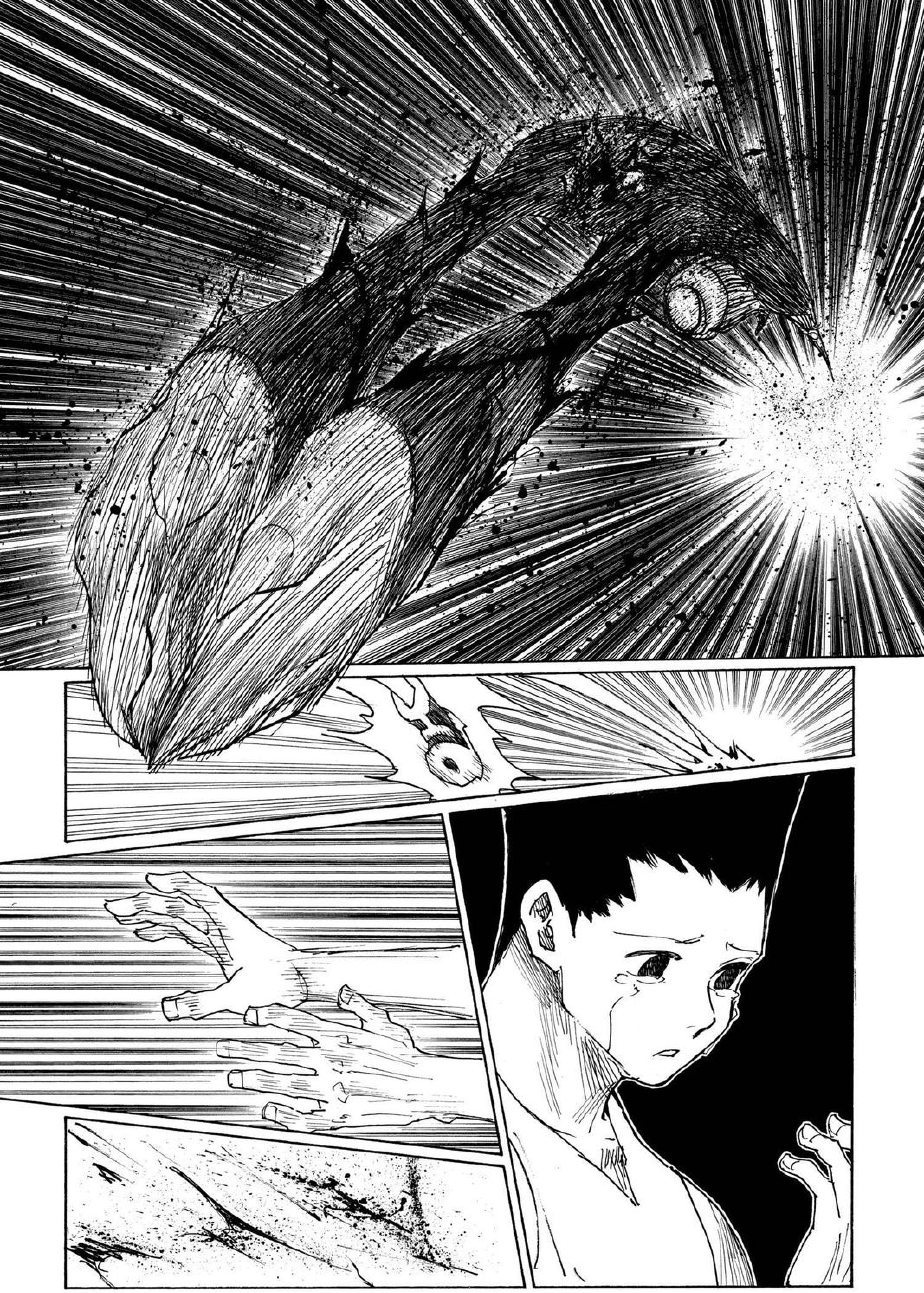

HE HEARD A CACOPHONY LIKE A SAW BEING DRAWN ACROSS STEEL STRINGS.
EEEEEEE
AND HE SAW...
WHO IS THAT?
GON?!
...A TOTALLY UNFAMILIAR SILHOUETTE.
JAN...
KEN...
A FIST BLOOD-STAINED FROM MULTIPLE BLOWS.

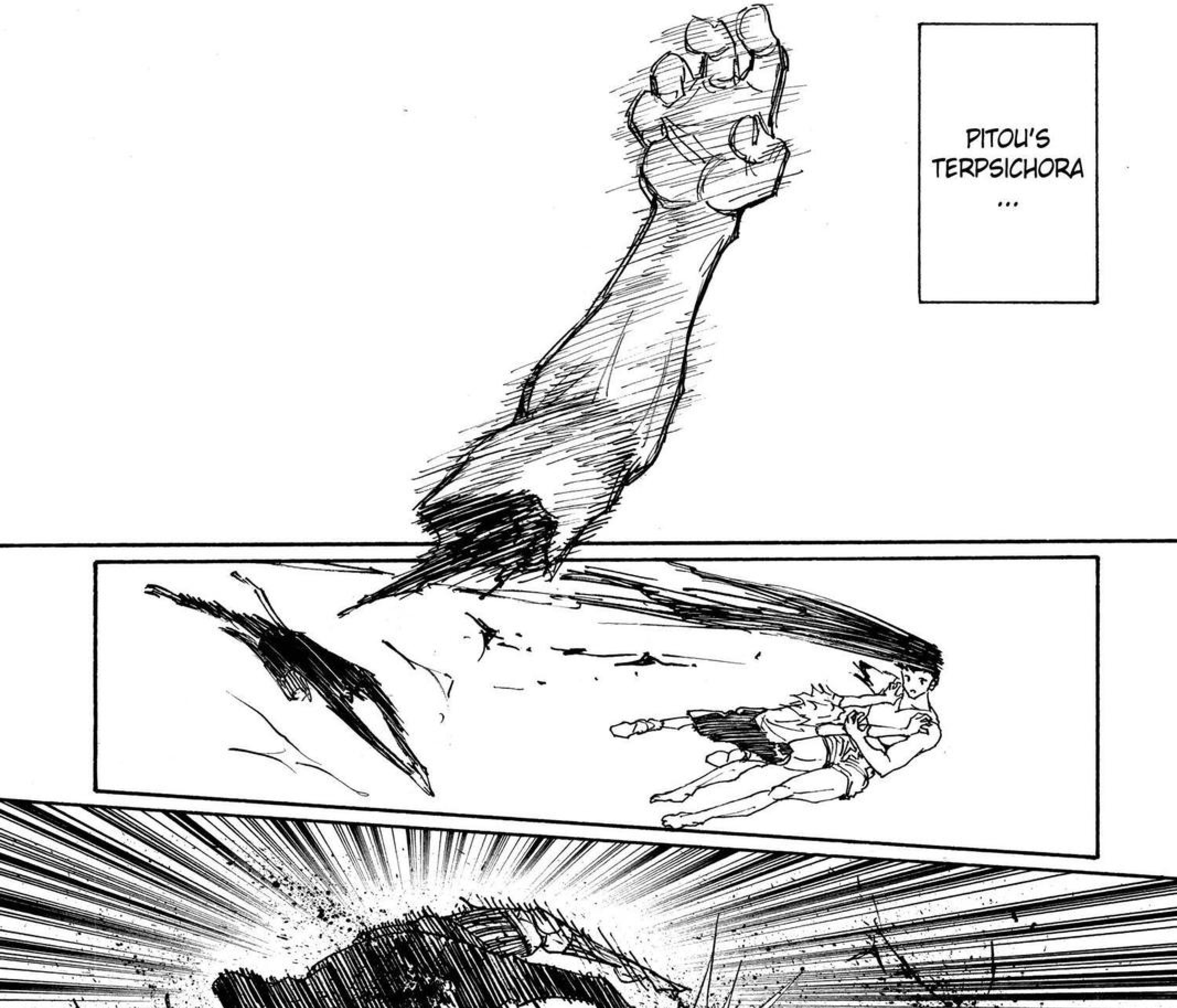

THAT FIST SMASHED PITOU'S HEAD INTO A PULP, EVEN THOUGH...
...HE WAS ALREADY LYING LIMP AS A RAG.
...
KITE.

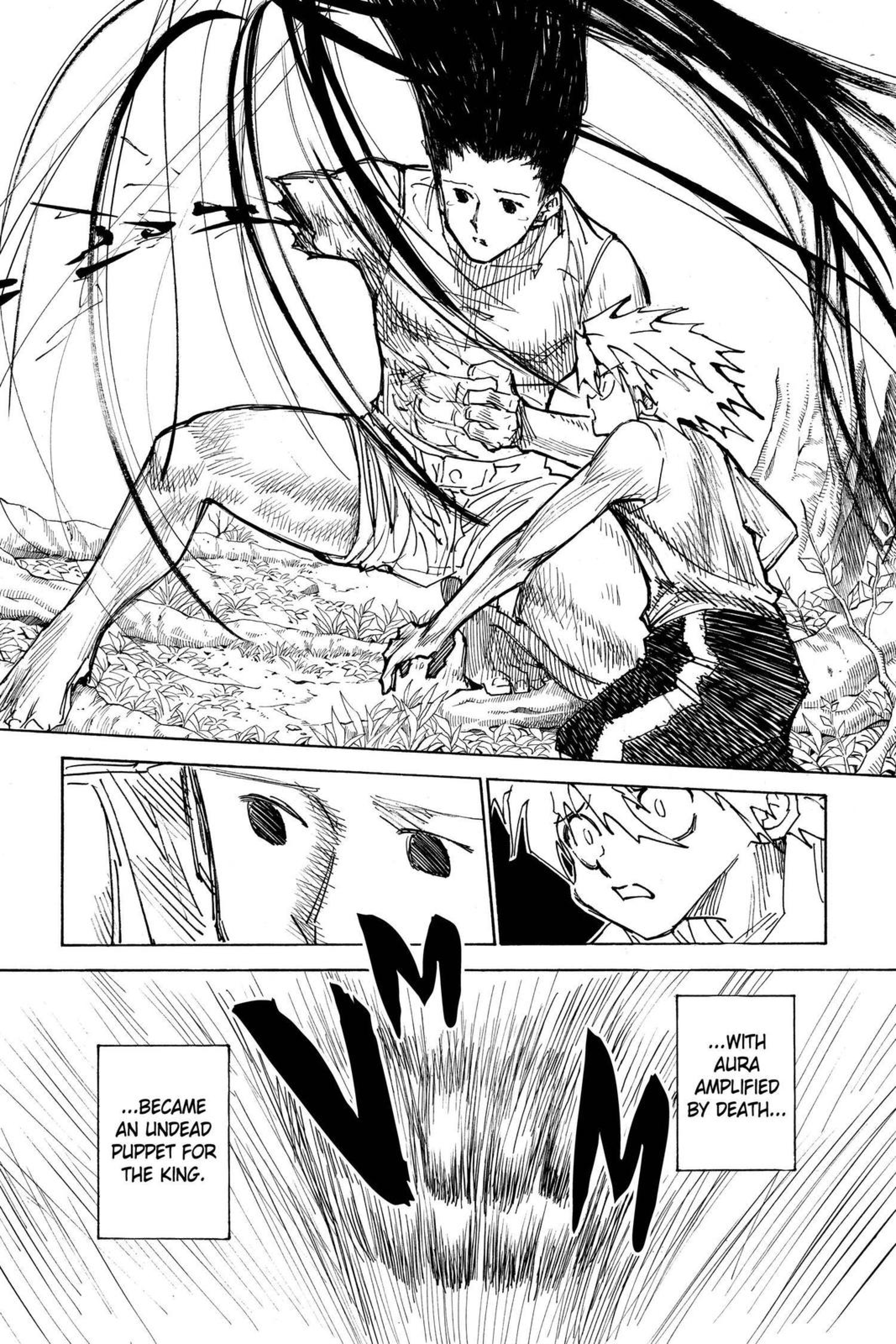

I MADE SURE TO FINISH HIM...
...LIKE YOU TAUGHT ME.
SO...
...
...
GON... IS THAT YOU?
KILLUA...

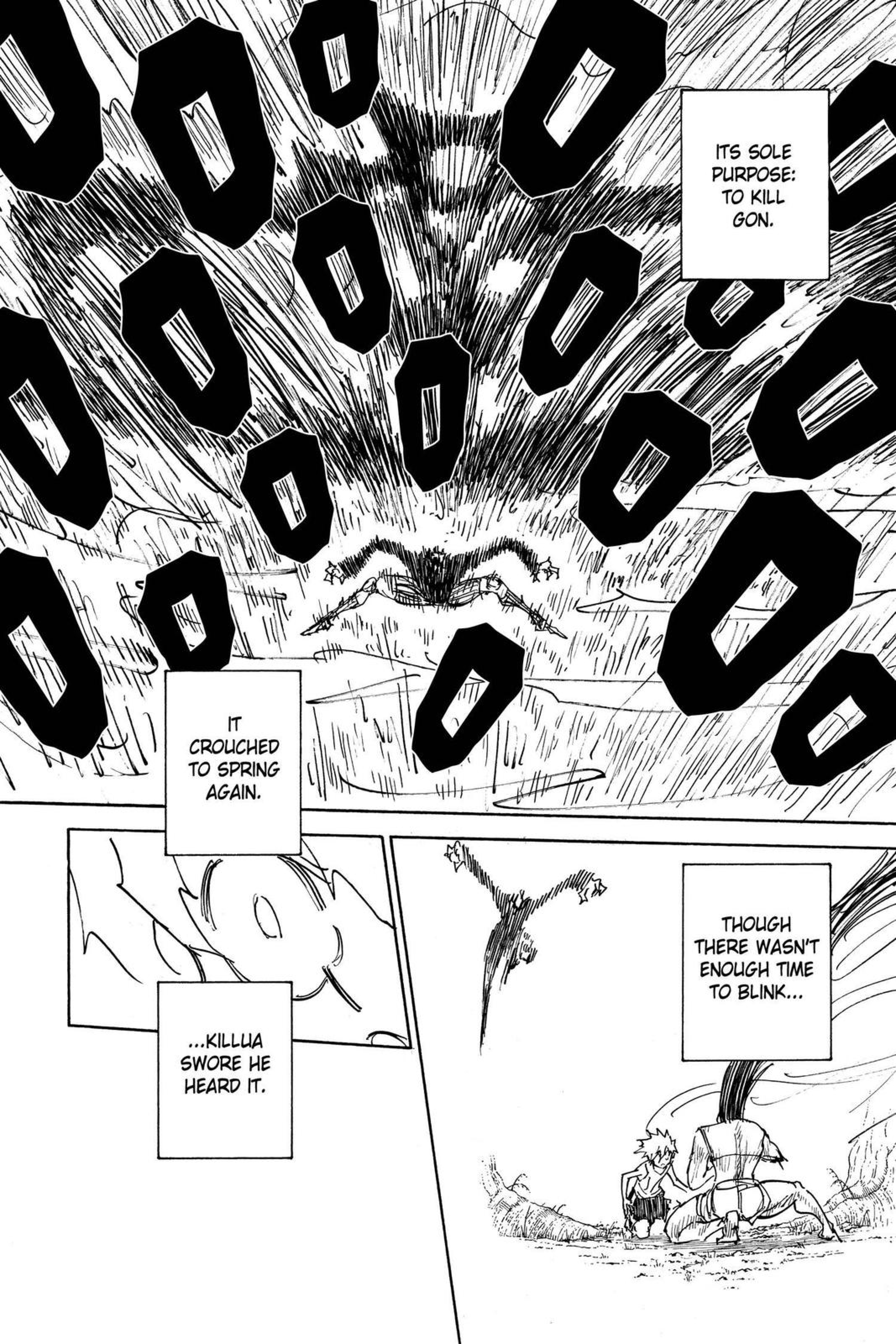

KILLUA IMMEDIATELY THOUGHT OF BISCUIT.
ONLY HER APPEARANCE CHANGED, NOT HER INTERNAL AURA.
AND SHE RESUMED HER *TRUE* FORM!!
THIS IS THE OPPOSITE!!
BUT HE KNEW THIS WAS DIFFERENT.
HOW LONG...? *DECADES?*
THIS IS WHAT HE SHOULD LOOK LIKE AFTER *YEARS* OF TRAINING!!
WHAT PRICE DID HE HAVE TO PAY...
BRR
...TO GET THIS MUCH AURA?

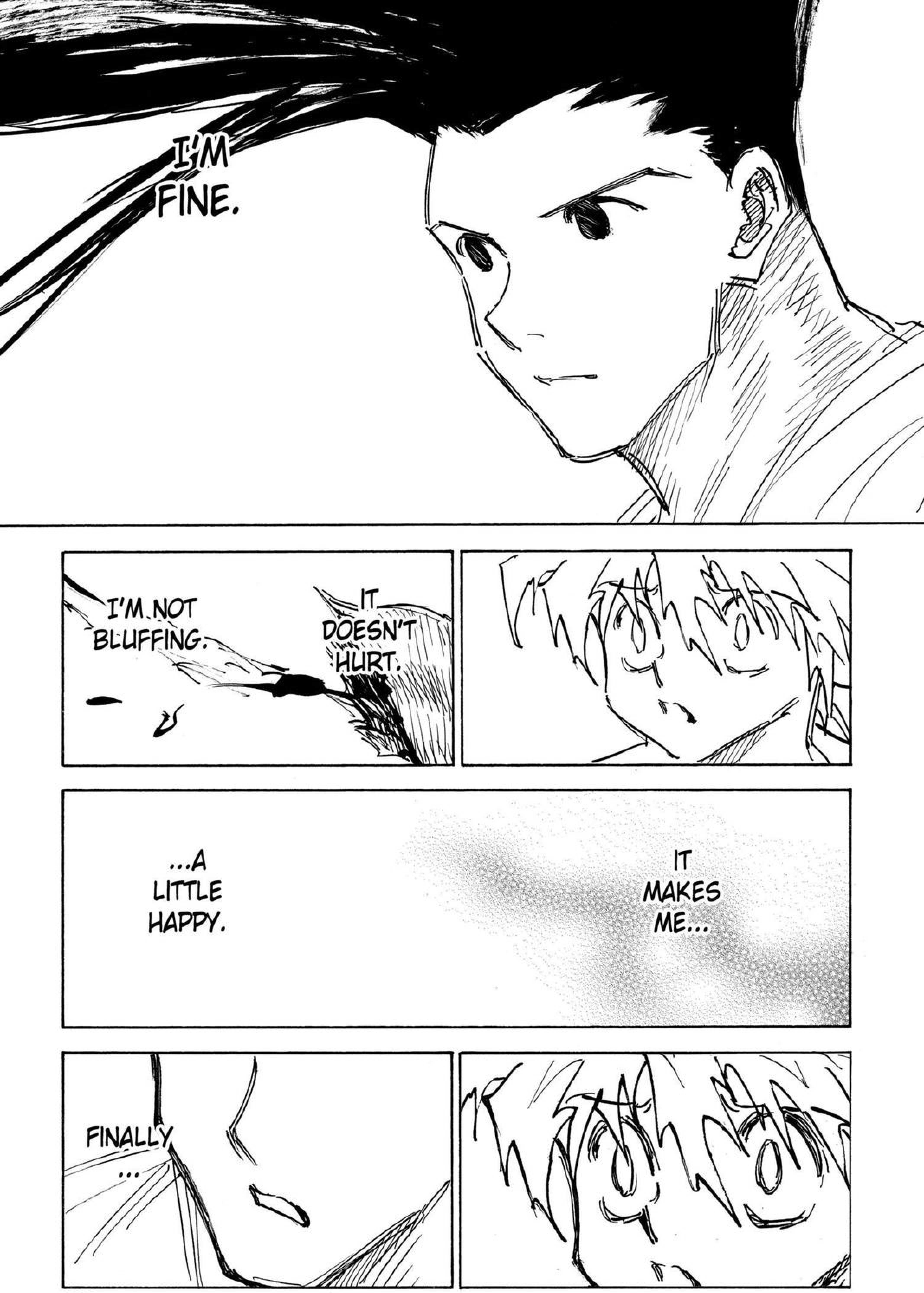


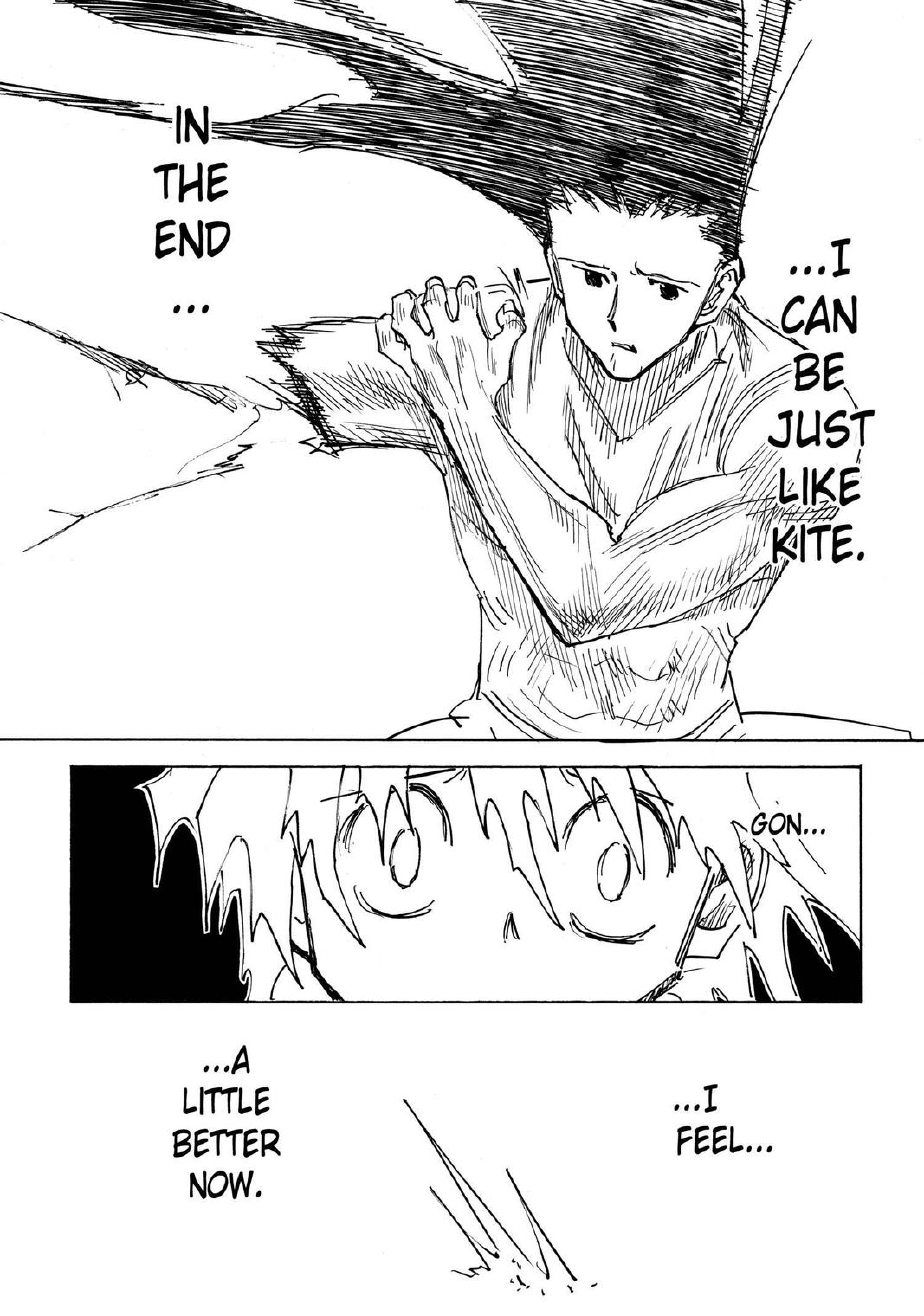


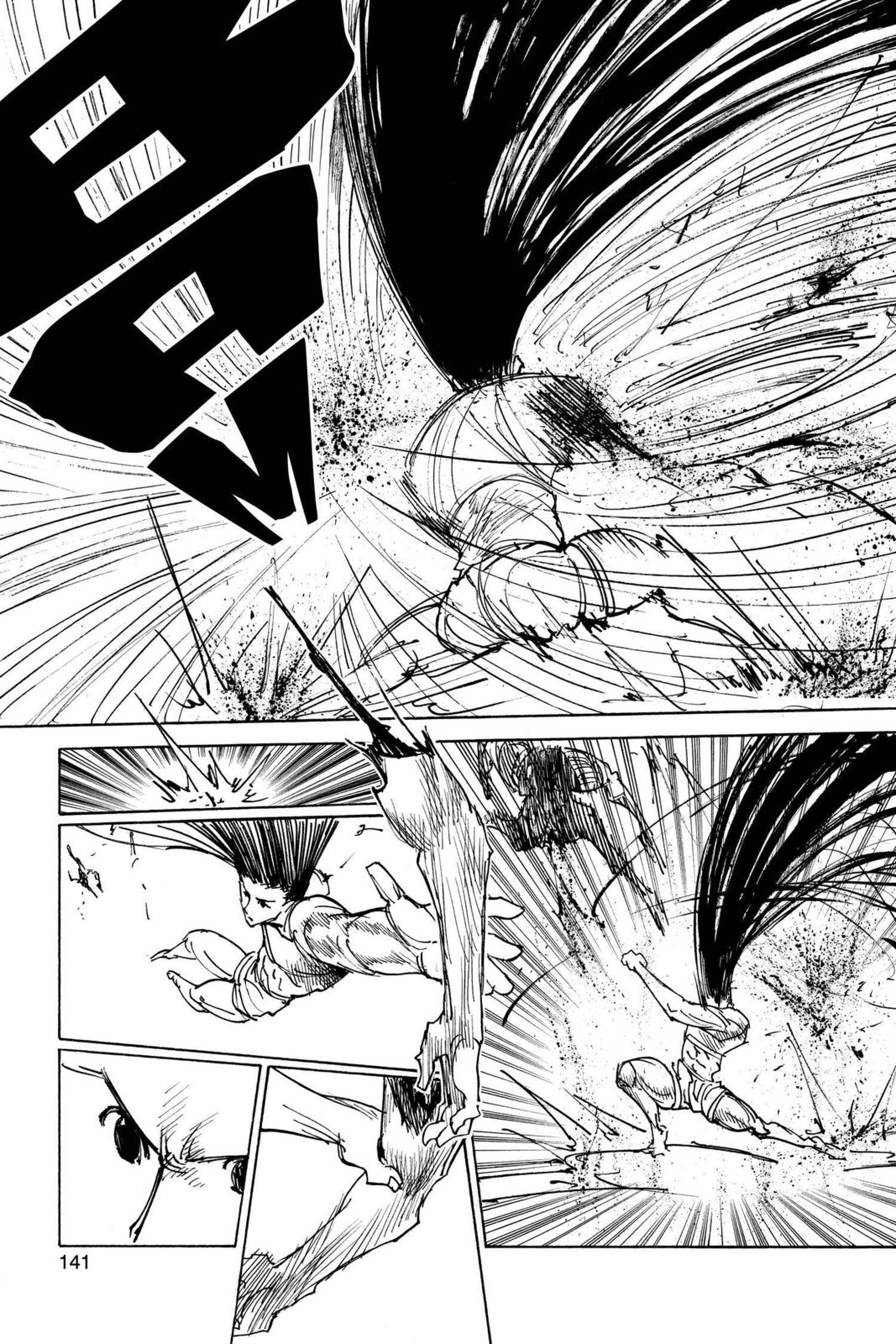

PITOU'S TERPSICHORA
...

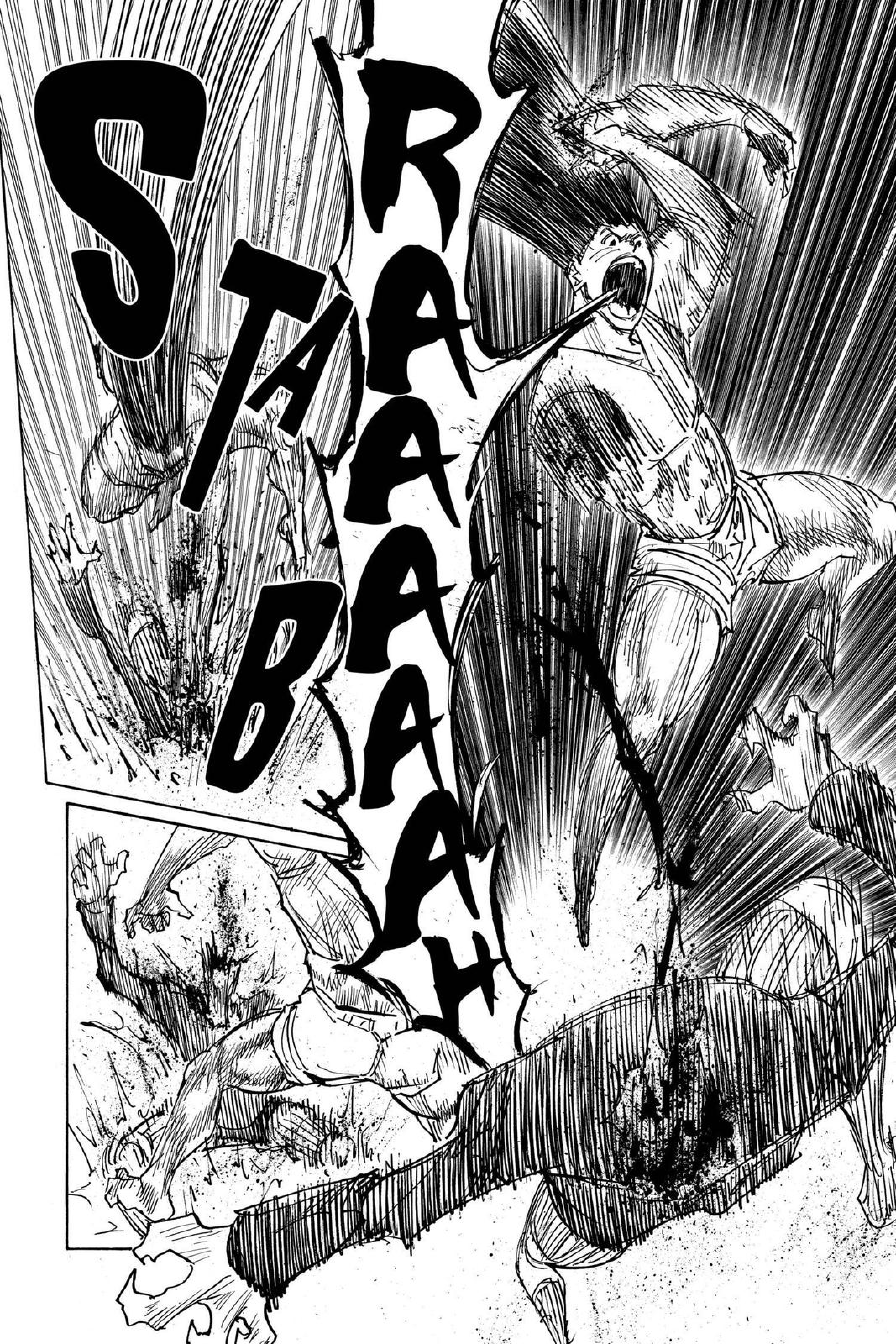

...WITH AURA AMPLIFIED BY DEATH...
VMMM
...BECAME AN UNDEAD PUPPET FOR THE KING.

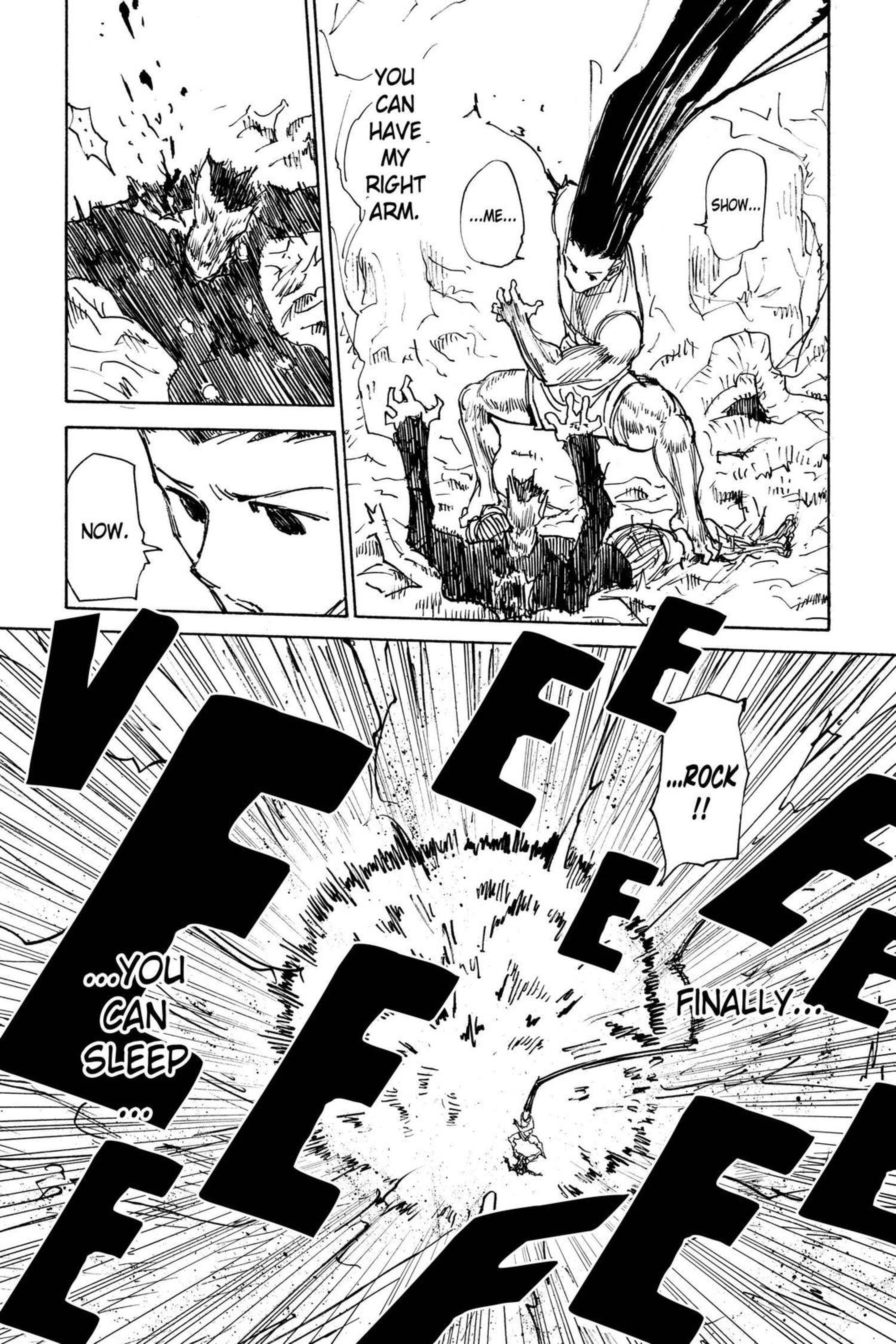

ITS SOLE PURPOSE: TO KILL GON.
IT CROUCHED TO SPRING AGAIN.
THOUGH THERE WASN'T ENOUGH TIME TO BLINK...
...KILLUA SWORE HE HEARD IT.

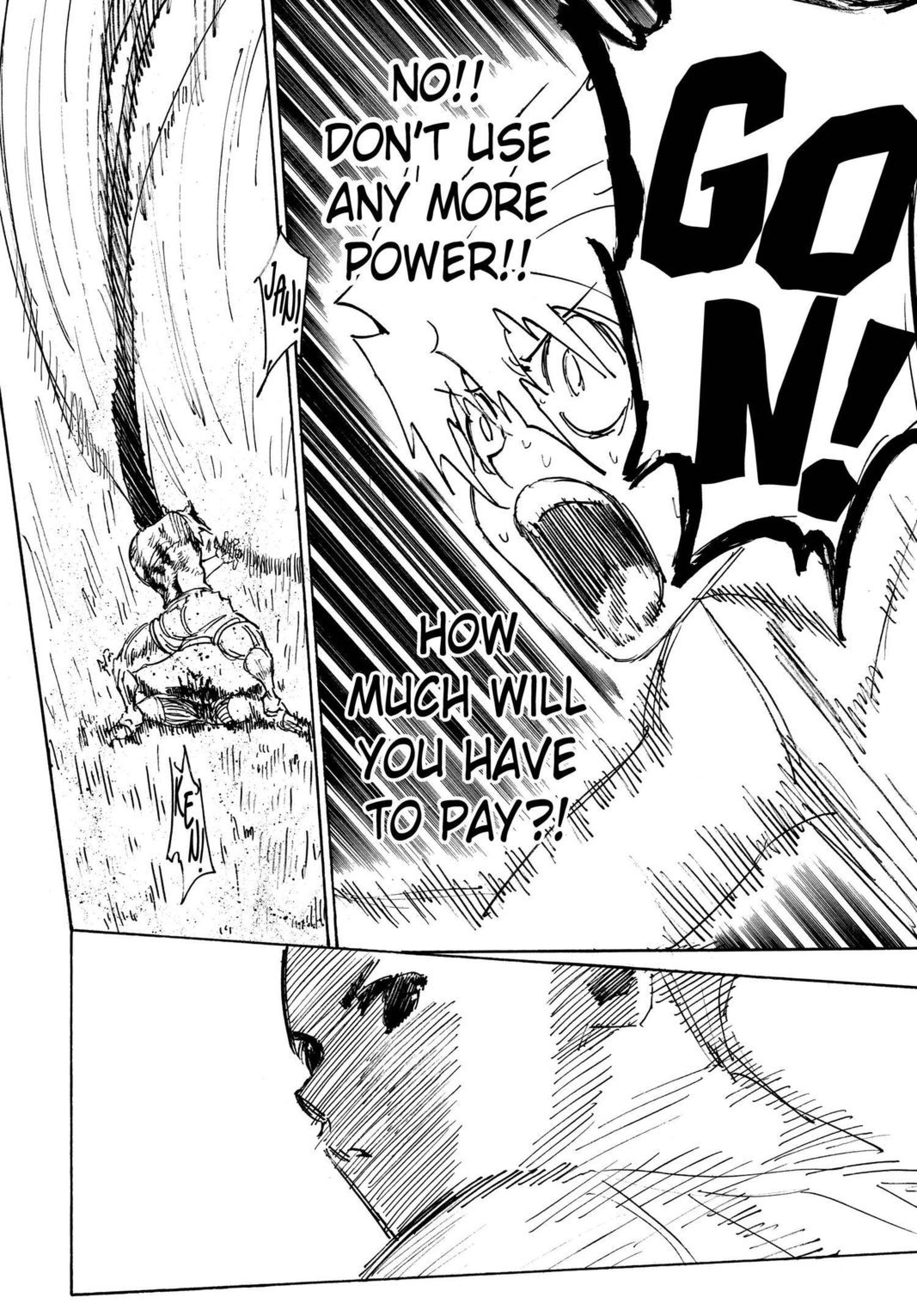

I'M FINE.
IT DOESN'T HURT.
I'M NOT BLUFFING.
IT MAKES ME...
...A LITTLE HAPPY.
FINALLY...

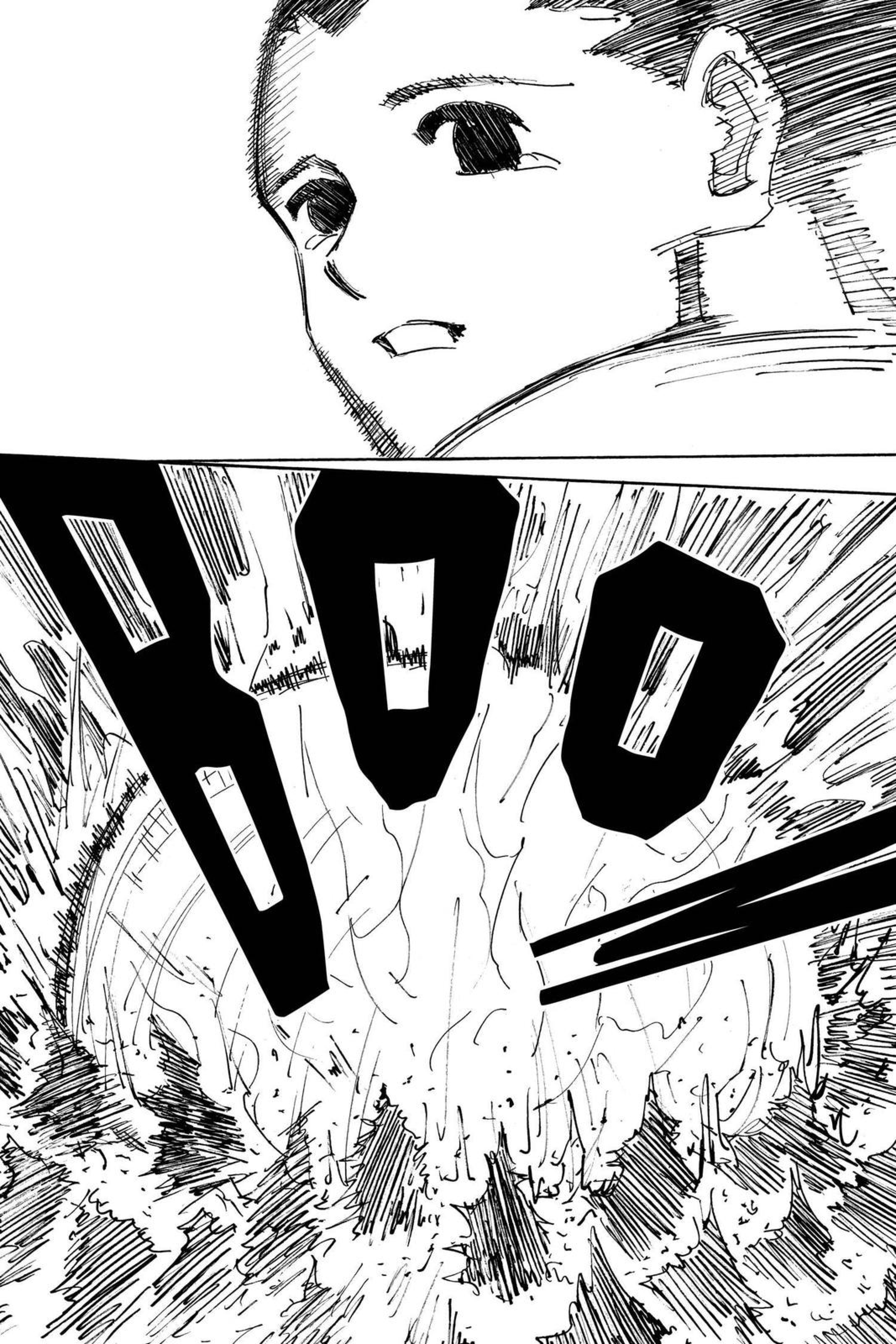

IN THE END ...
...I CAN BE JUST LIKE KITE.
GON...
...I FEEL...
...A LITTLE BETTER NOW.


BAM

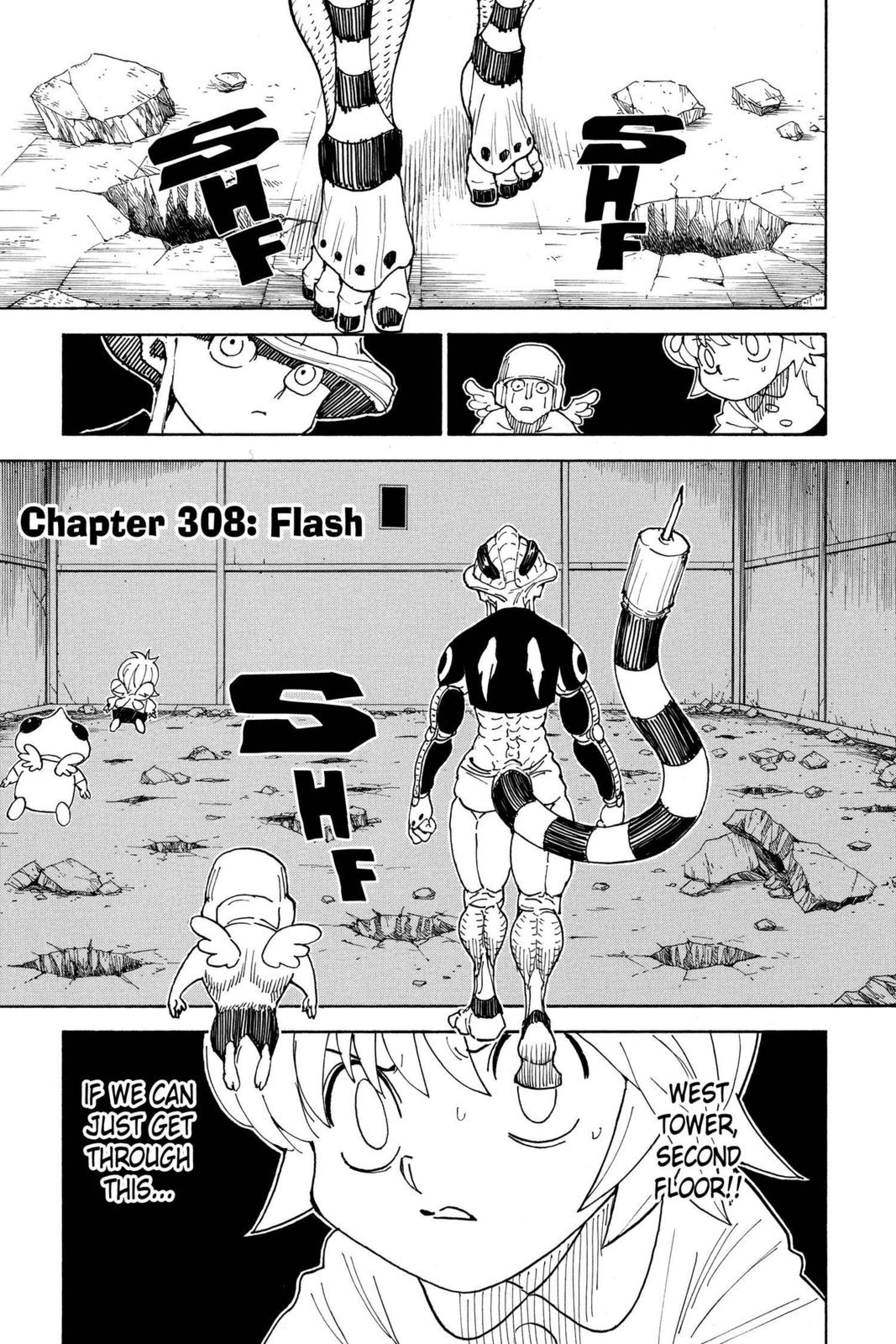

RAAAAAH
STAB

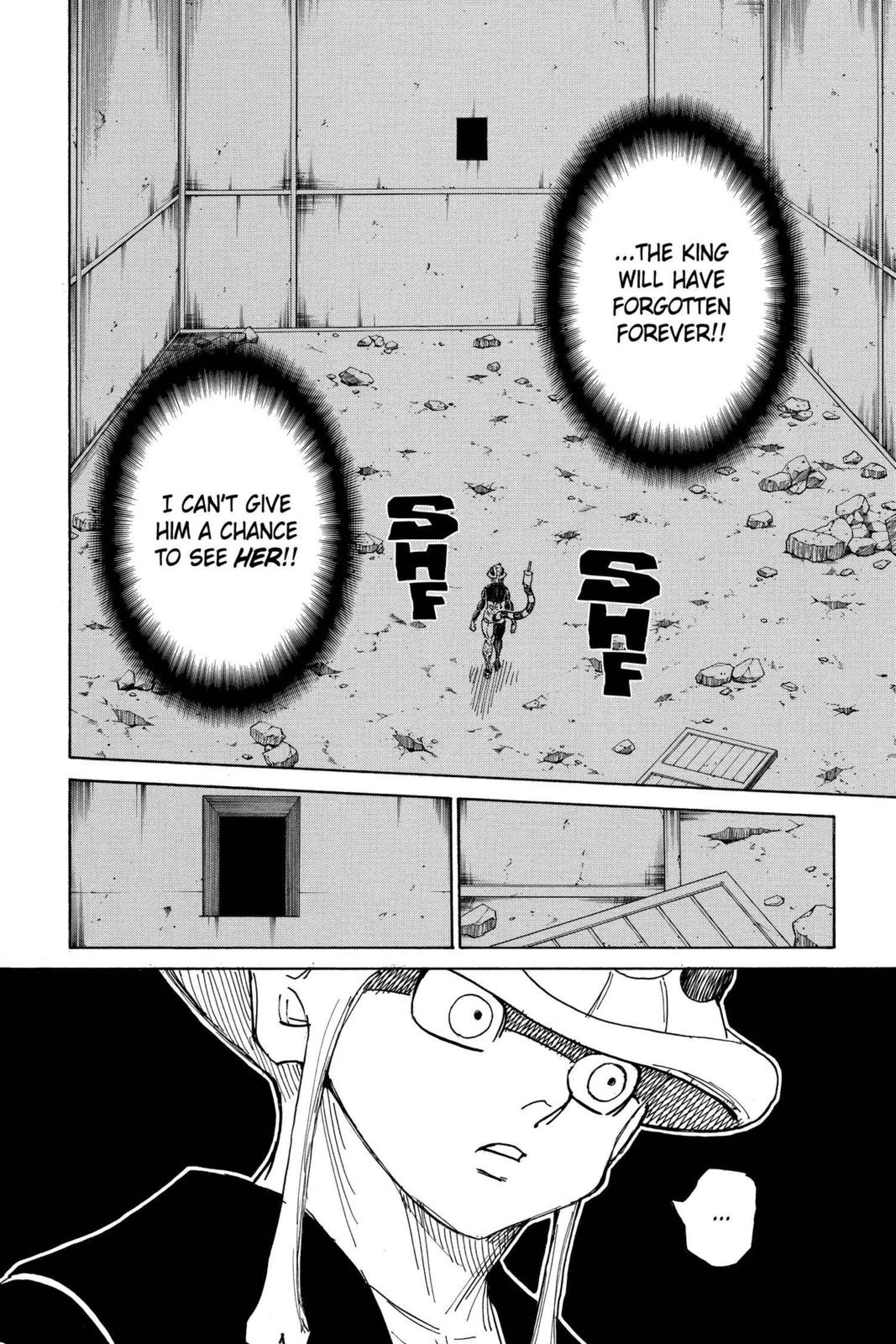

SHOW...
...ME...
YOU CAN HAVE MY RIGHT ARM.
NOW.
...ROCK !!
FINALLY...
...YOU CAN SLEEP ...

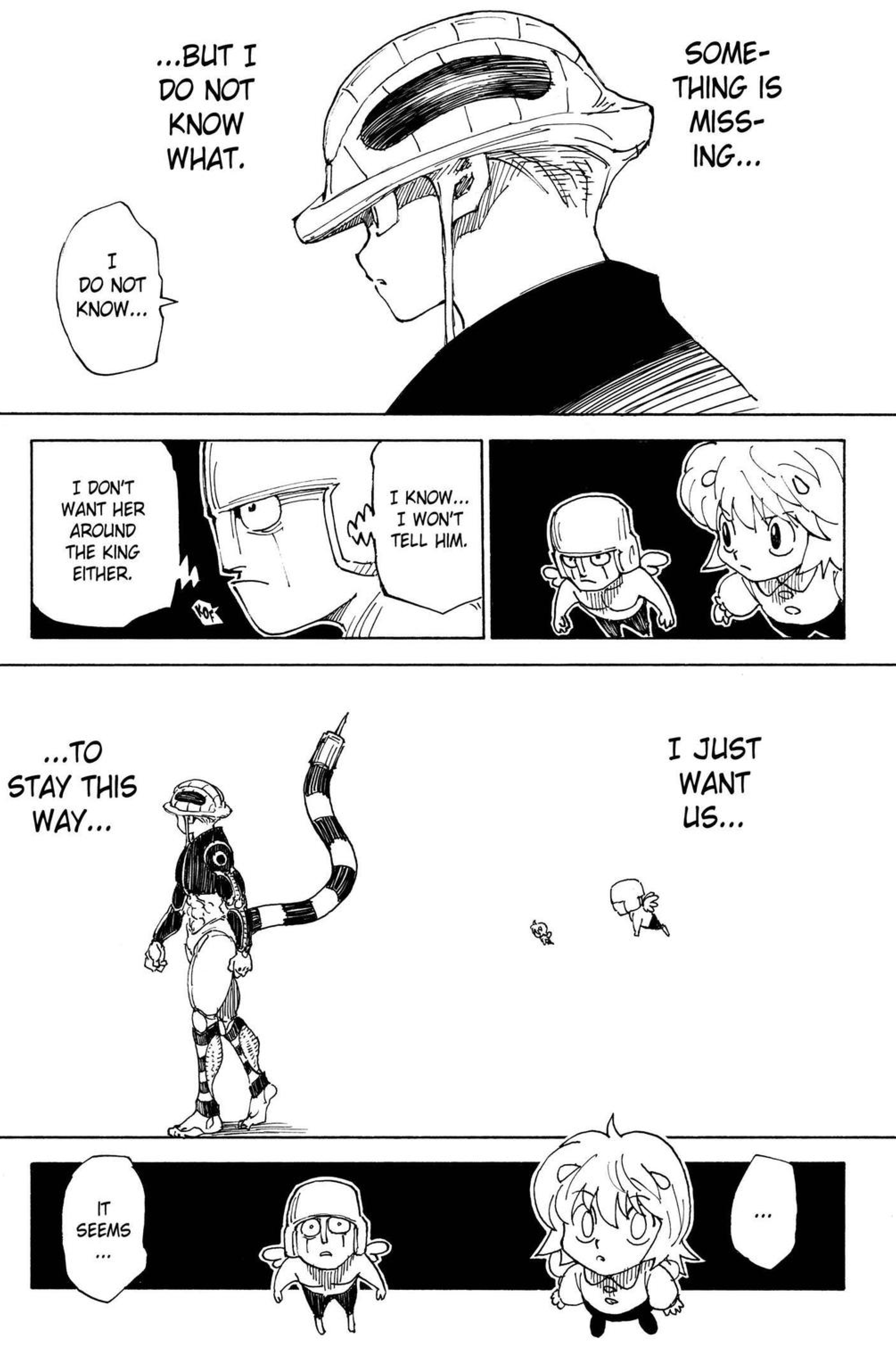

GON!
NO!! DON'T USE ANY MORE POWER!!
HOW MUCH WILL YOU HAVE TO PAY?!
JAN!
KEN!

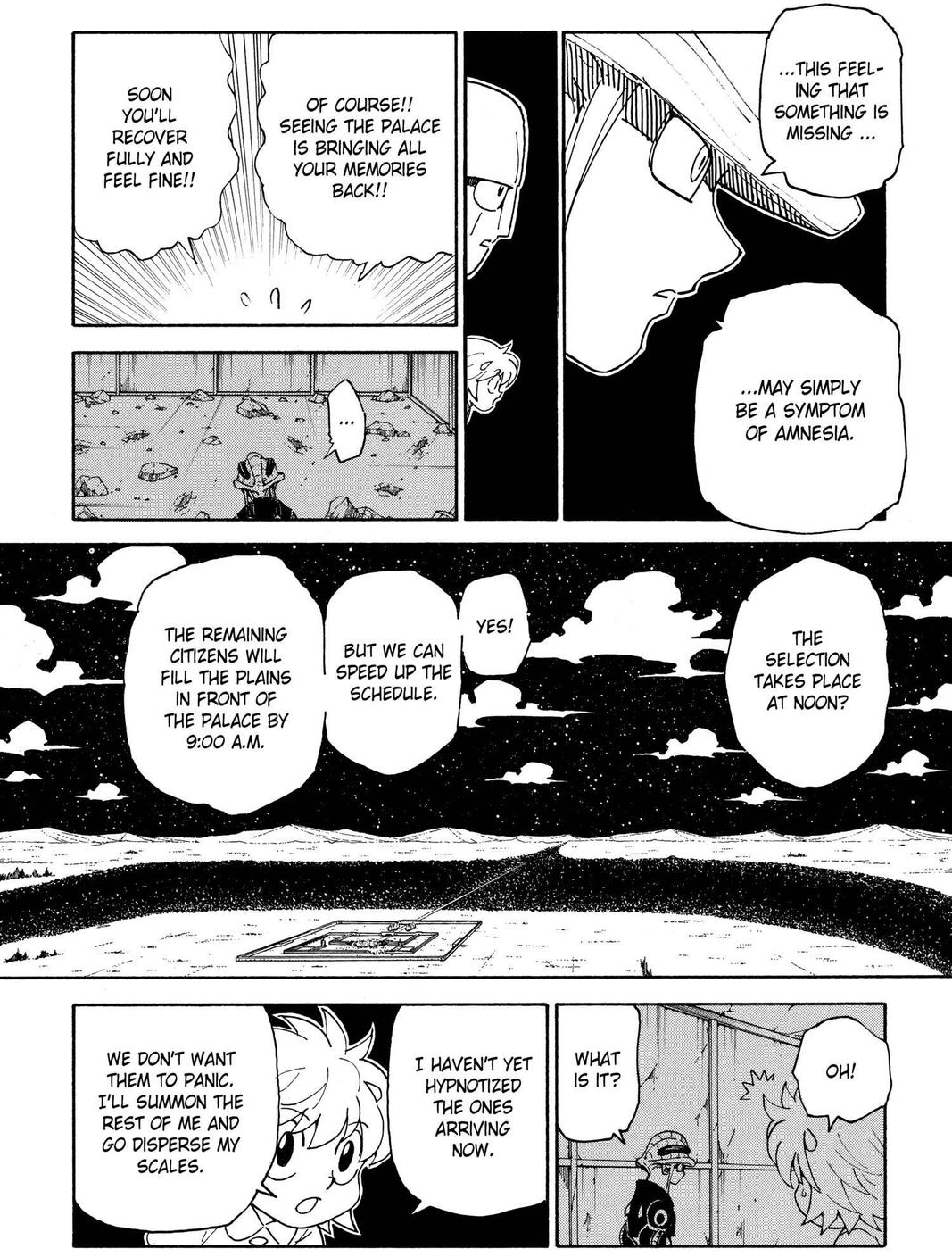

BOO

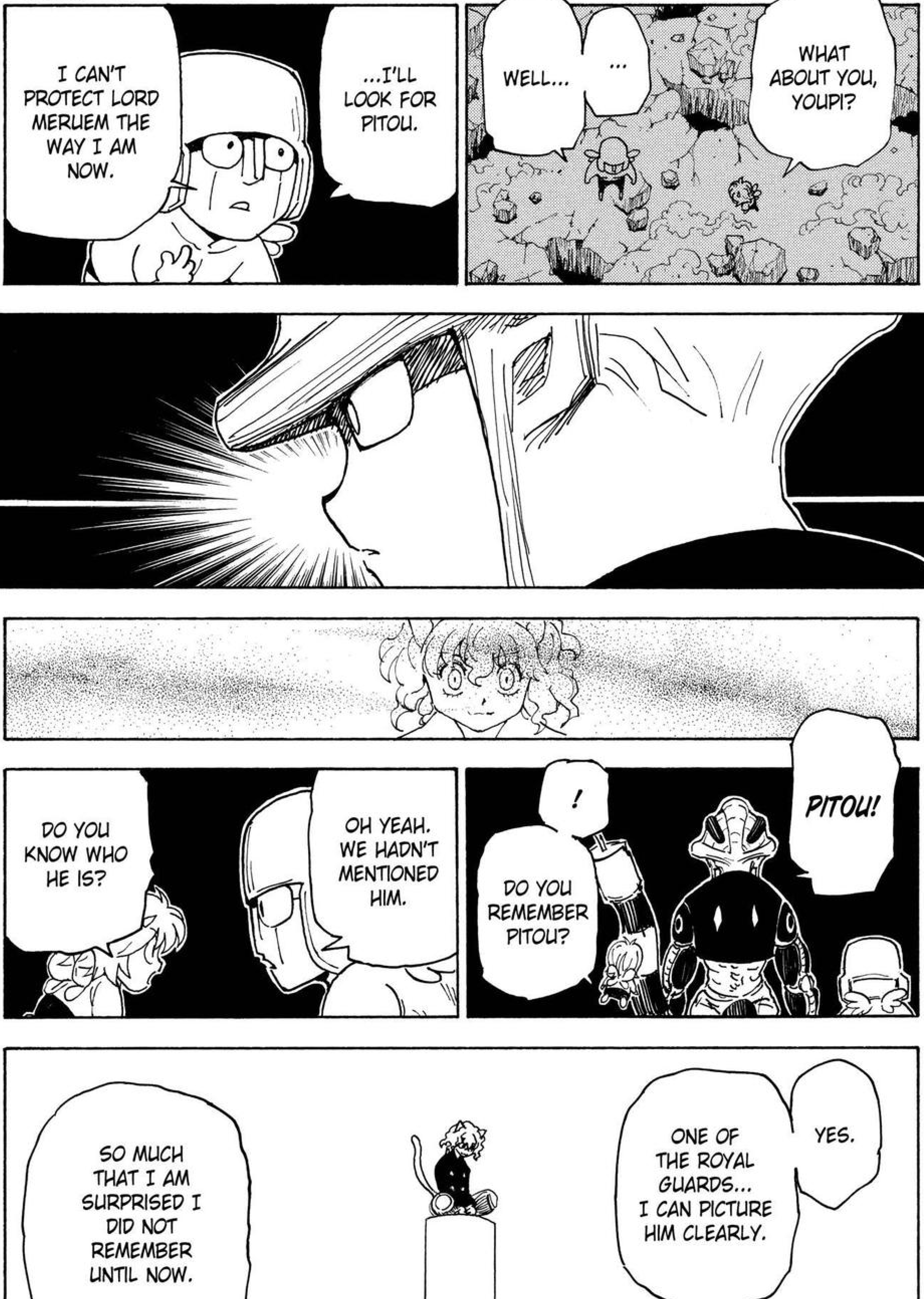
Chapter 308: Flash

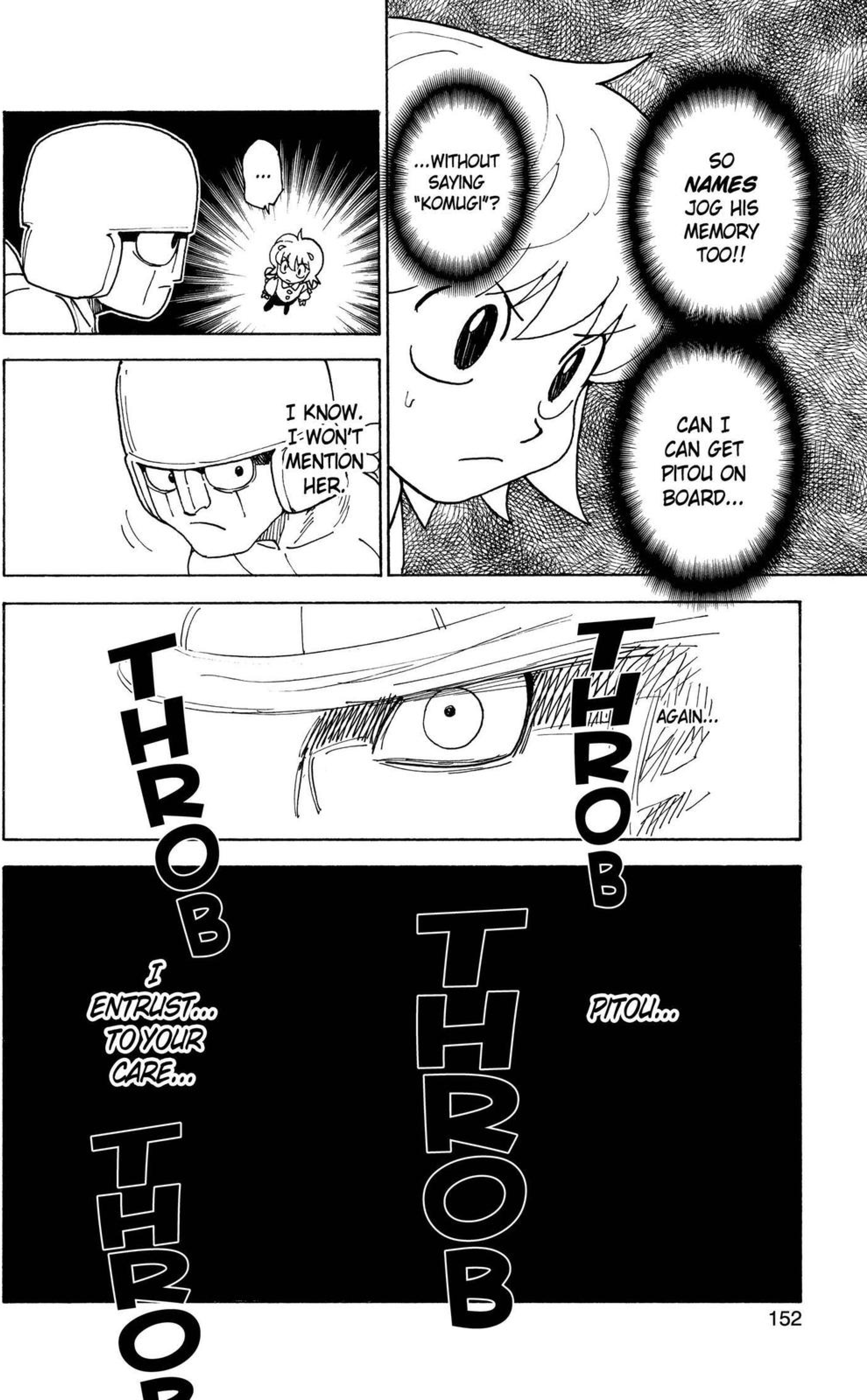

SHF
SHF
SHF
WEST TOWER, SECOND FLOOR!!
IF WE CAN JUST GET THROUGH THIS...

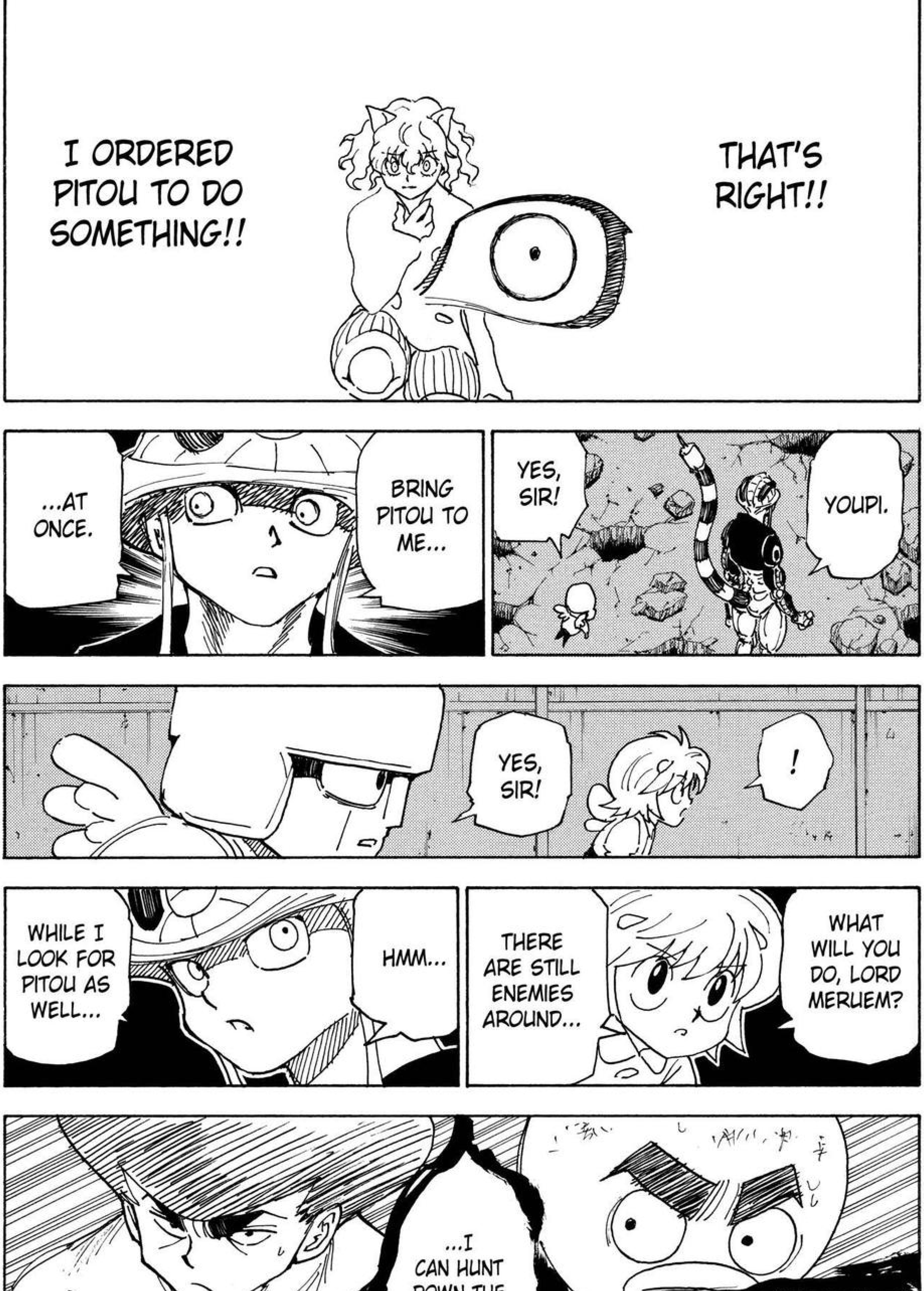

...THE KING WILL HAVE FORGOTTEN FOREVER!!
I CAN'T GIVE HIM A CHANCE TO SEE *HER*!!
SHF
SHF
...

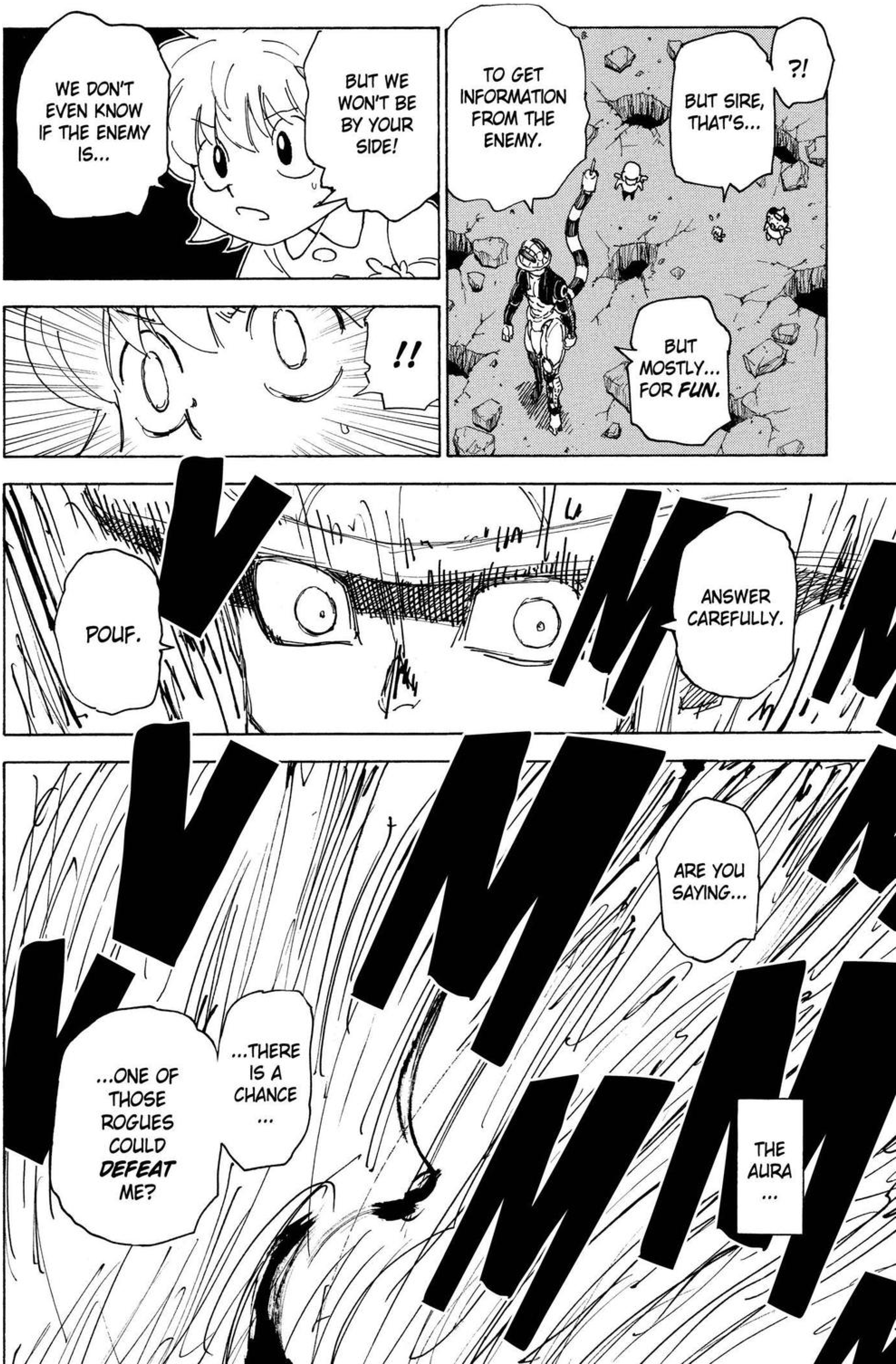

SOMETHING IS MISSING...
...BUT I DO NOT KNOW WHAT.
I DO NOT KNOW...
I KNOW... I WON'T TELL HIM.
I DON'T WANT HER AROUND THE KING EITHER.
KOF
I JUST WANT US...
...TO STAY THIS WAY...
...
IT SEEMS ...

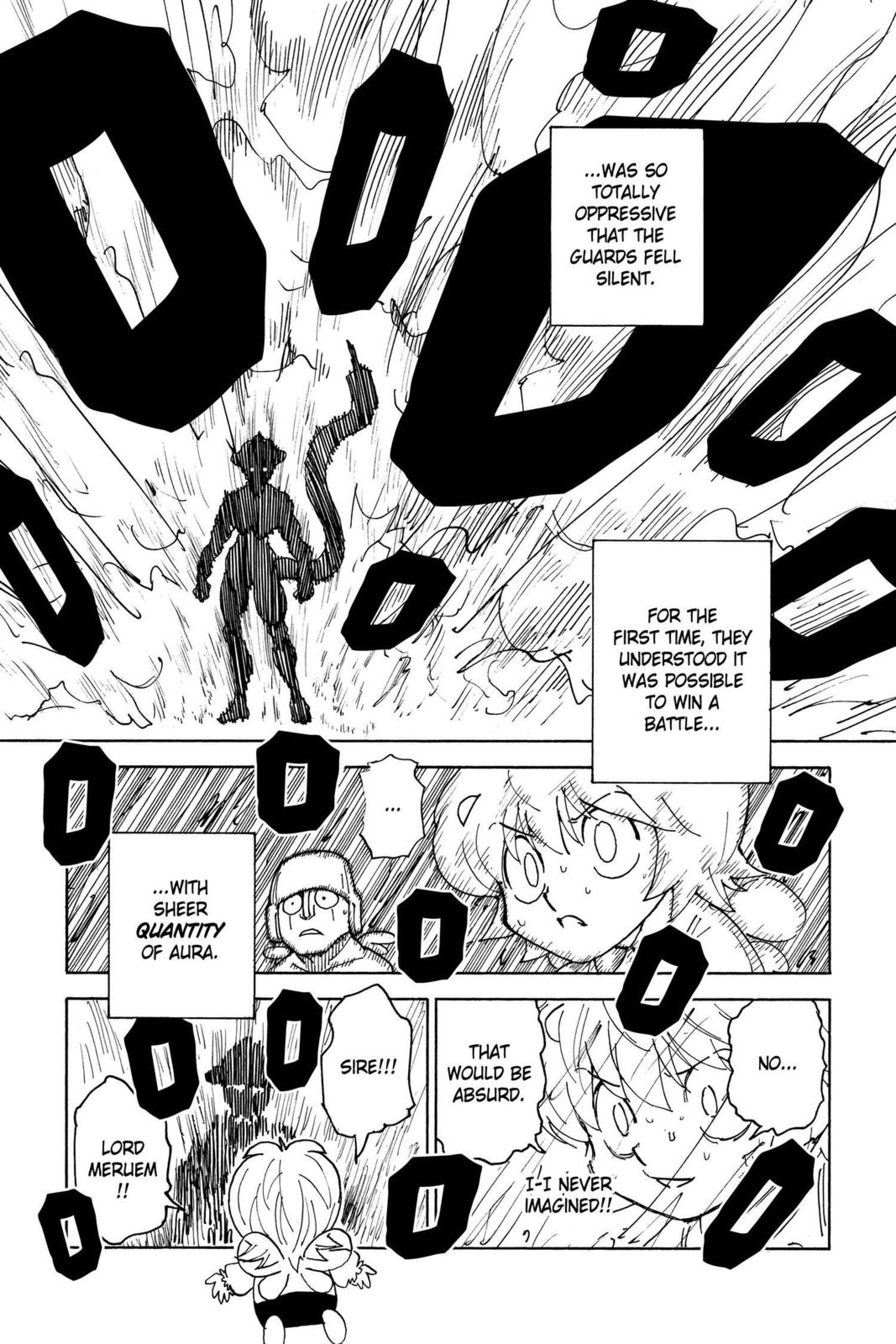

...THIS FEELING THAT SOMETHING IS MISSING ...
...MAY SIMPLY BE A SYMPTOM OF AMNESIA.
OF COURSE!! SEEING THE PALACE IS BRINGING ALL YOUR MEMORIES BACK!!
SOON YOU'LL RECOVER FULLY AND FEEL FINE!!
...
THE SELECTION TAKES PLACE AT NOON?
YES!
BUT WE CAN SPEED UP THE SCHEDULE.
THE REMAINING CITIZENS WILL FILL THE PLAINS IN FRONT OF THE PALACE BY 9:00 A.M.
OH!
WHAT IS IT?
I HAVEN'T YET HYPNOTIZED THE ONES ARRIVING NOW.
WE DON'T WANT THEM TO PANIC. I'LL SUMMON THE REST OF ME AND GO DISPERSE MY SCALES.

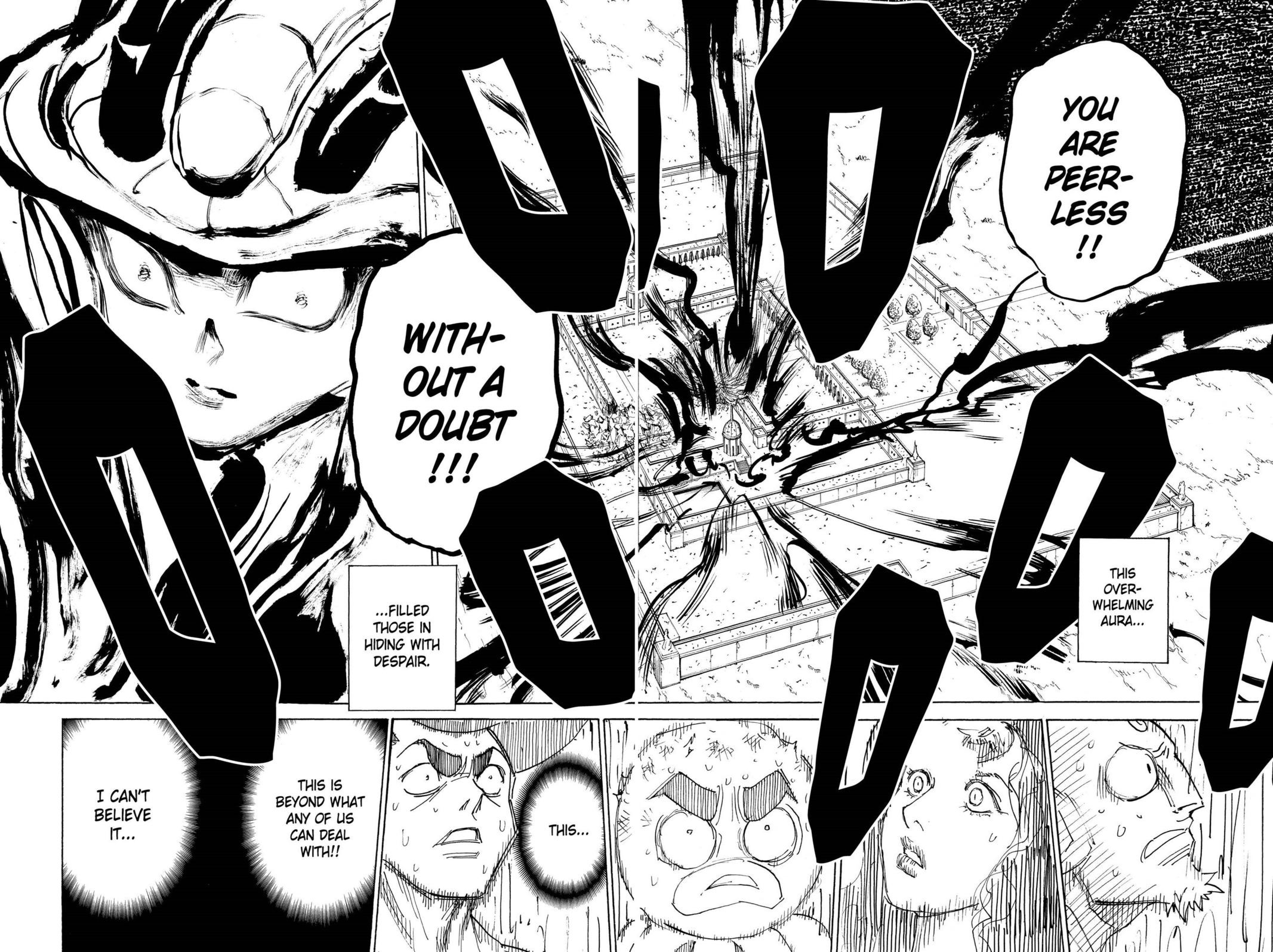

WHAT ABOUT YOU, YOUPI?
...
WELL...
...I'LL LOOK FOR PITOU.
I CAN'T PROTECT LORD MERUEM THE WAY I AM NOW.
PITOU!
!
DO YOU REMEMBER PITOU?
OH YEAH. WE HADN'T MENTIONED HIM.
DO YOU KNOW WHO HE IS?
YES.
ONE OF THE ROYAL GUARDS... I CAN PICTURE HIM CLEARLY.
SO MUCH THAT I AM SURPRISED I DID NOT REMEMBER UNTIL NOW.

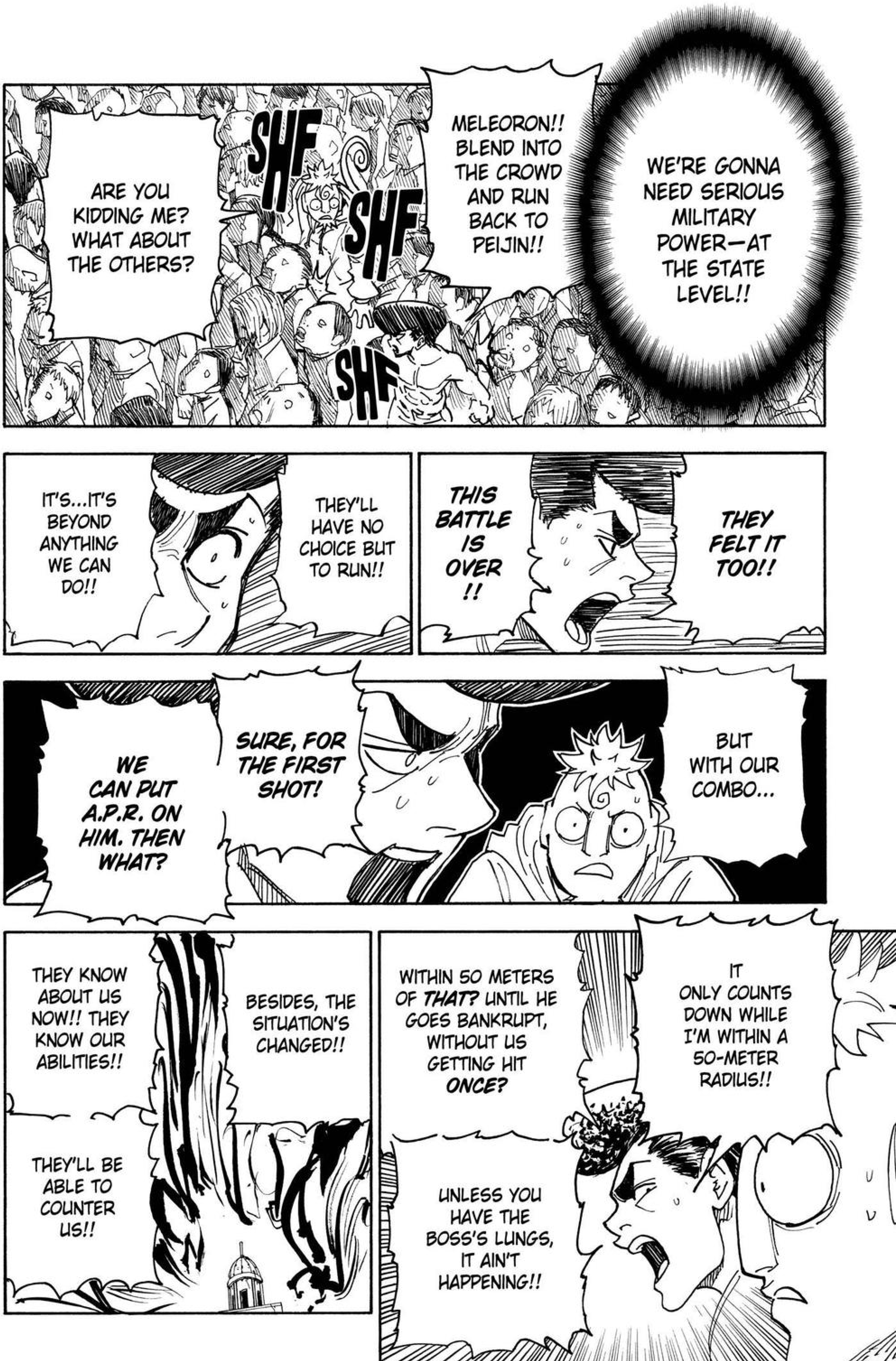

SO **NAMES** JOG HIS MEMORY TOO!!
CAN I CAN GET PITOU ON BOARD...
...WITHOUT SAYING "KOMUGI"?
...
I KNOW. I WON'T MENTION HER.
THROB
AGAIN...
THROB
PITOU...
THROB
I ENTRUST... TO YOUR CARE...
THROB

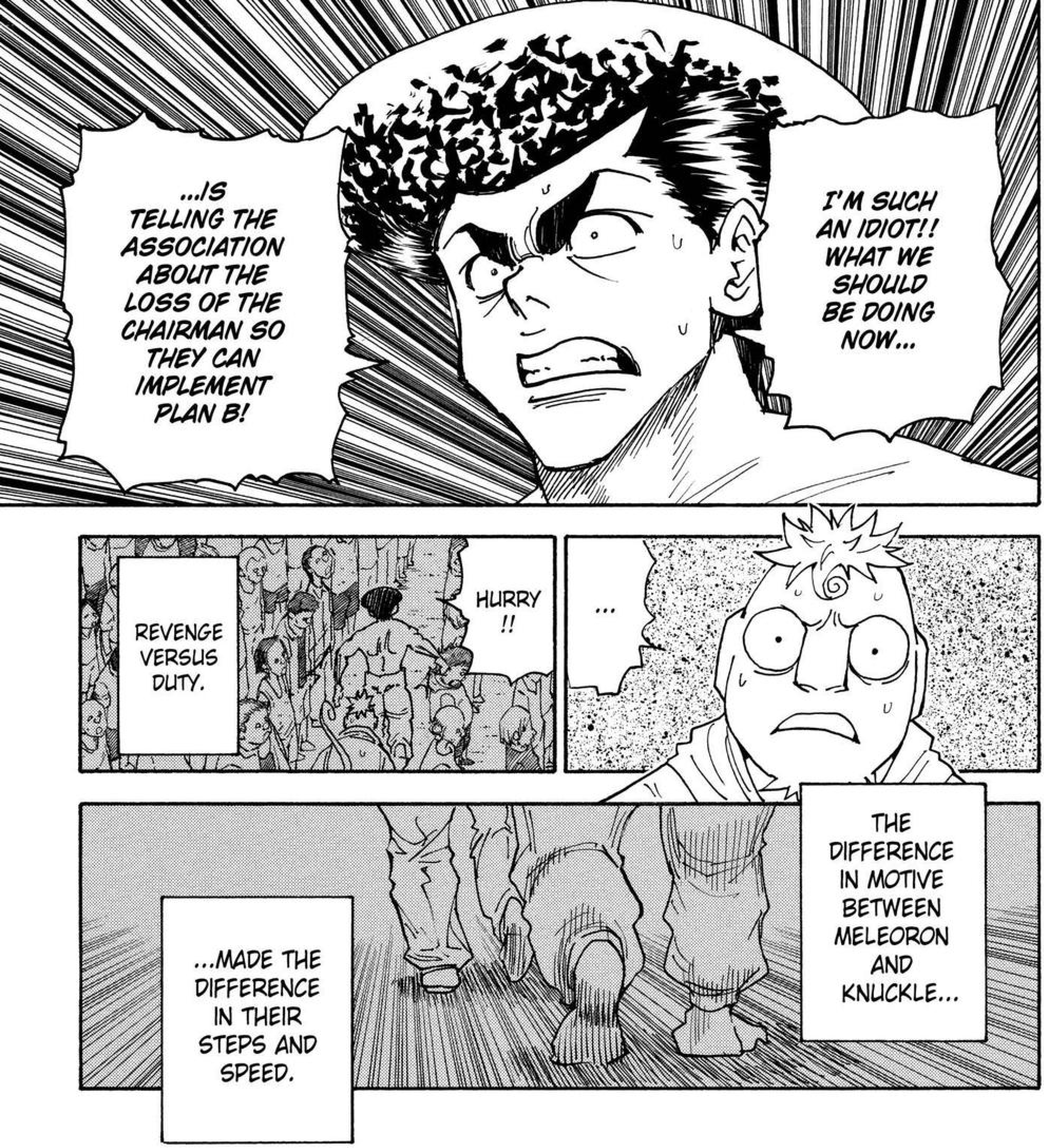

THAT'S RIGHT!!
I ORDERED PITOU TO DO SOMETHING!!
YOUPI.
YES, SIR!
BRING PITOU TO ME...
...AT ONCE.
!
YES, SIR!
WHAT WILL YOU DO, LORD MERUEM?
THERE ARE STILL ENEMIES AROUND...
HMM...
WHILE I LOOK FOR PITOU AS WELL...
...I CAN HUNT DOWN THE STRAGGLERS.


?!
BUT SIRE, THAT'S...
TO GET INFORMATION FROM THE ENEMY.
BUT MOSTLY... FOR **FUN.**
BUT WE WON'T BE BY YOUR SIDE!
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW IF THE ENEMY IS...
!!
ANSWER CAREFULLY.
POUF.
ARE YOU SAYING...
THE AURA...
...THERE IS A CHANCE...
...ONE OF THOSE ROGUES COULD ***DEFEAT*** ME?

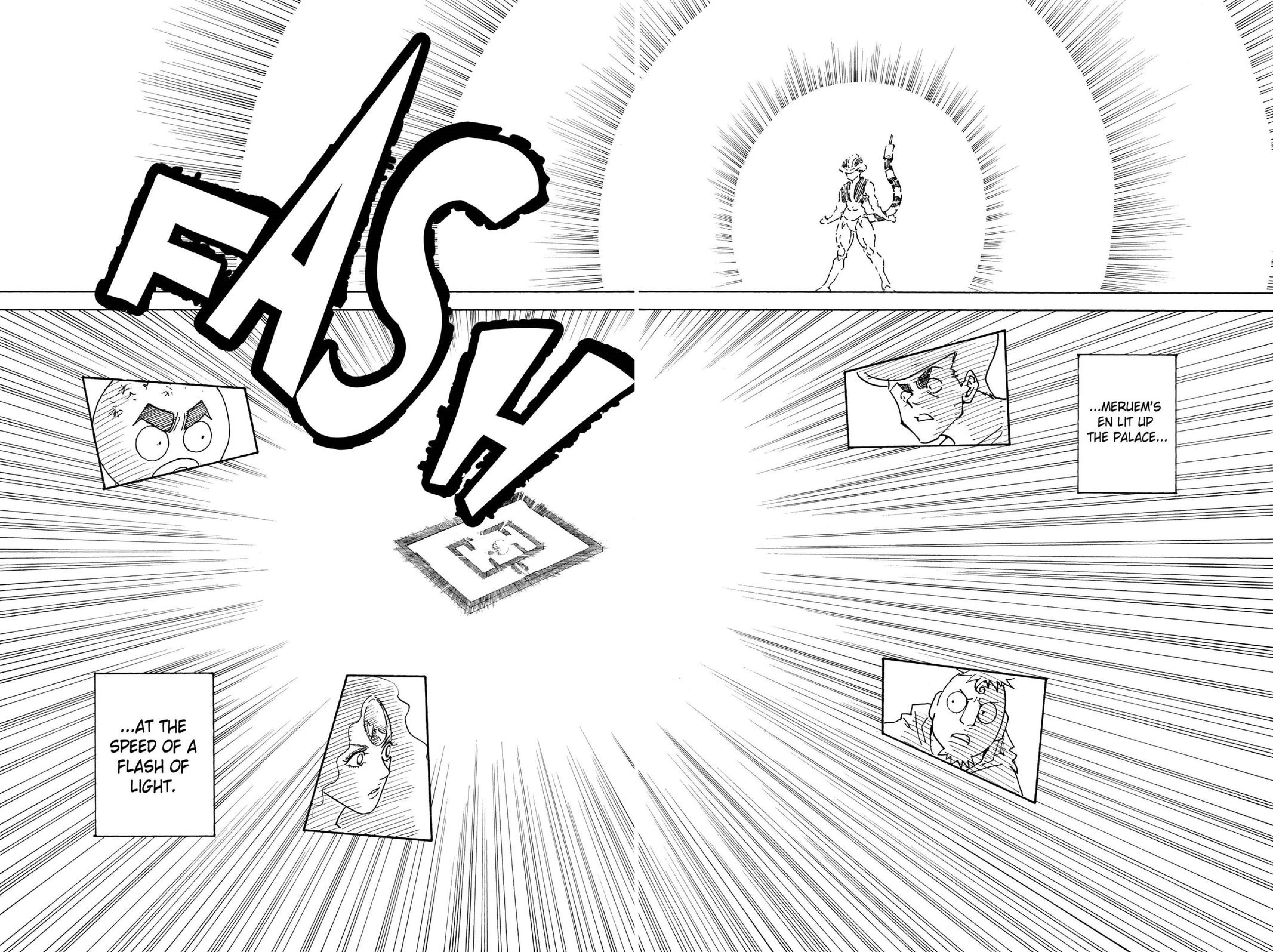

...WAS SO TOTALLY OPPRESSIVE THAT THE GUARDS FELL SILENT.
FOR THE FIRST TIME, THEY UNDERSTOOD IT WAS POSSIBLE TO WIN A BATTLE...
...
...WITH SHEER *QUANTITY* OF AURA.
NO...
THAT WOULD BE ABSURD.
I-I NEVER IMAGINED!!
SIRE!!!
LORD MERUEM !!

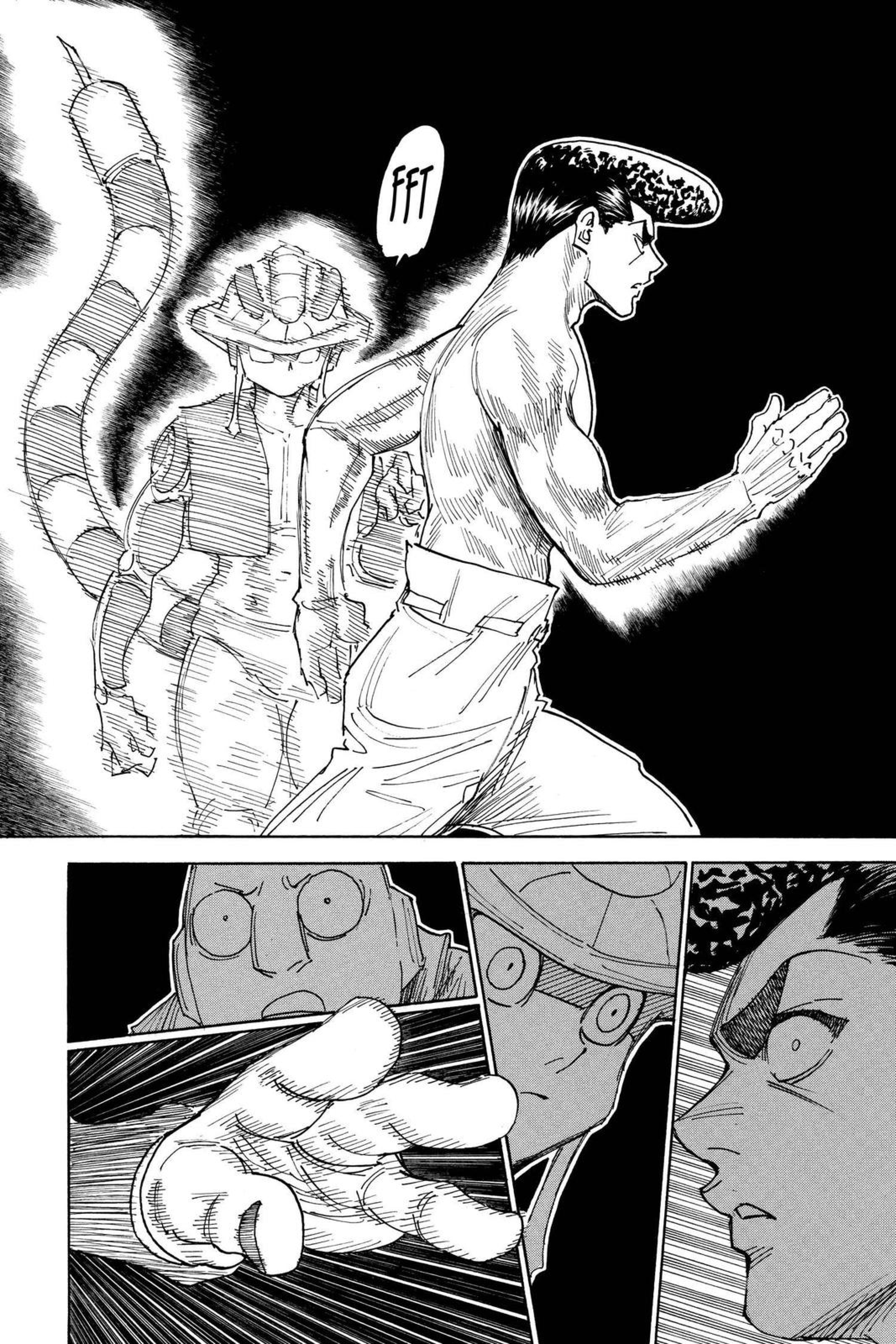

YOU ARE PEERLESS!!
THIS OVERWHELMING AURA...
WITHOUT A DOUBT!!!
...FILLED THOSE IN HIDING WITH DESPAIR.
THIS...
THIS IS BEYOND WHAT ANY OF US CAN DEAL WITH!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT...

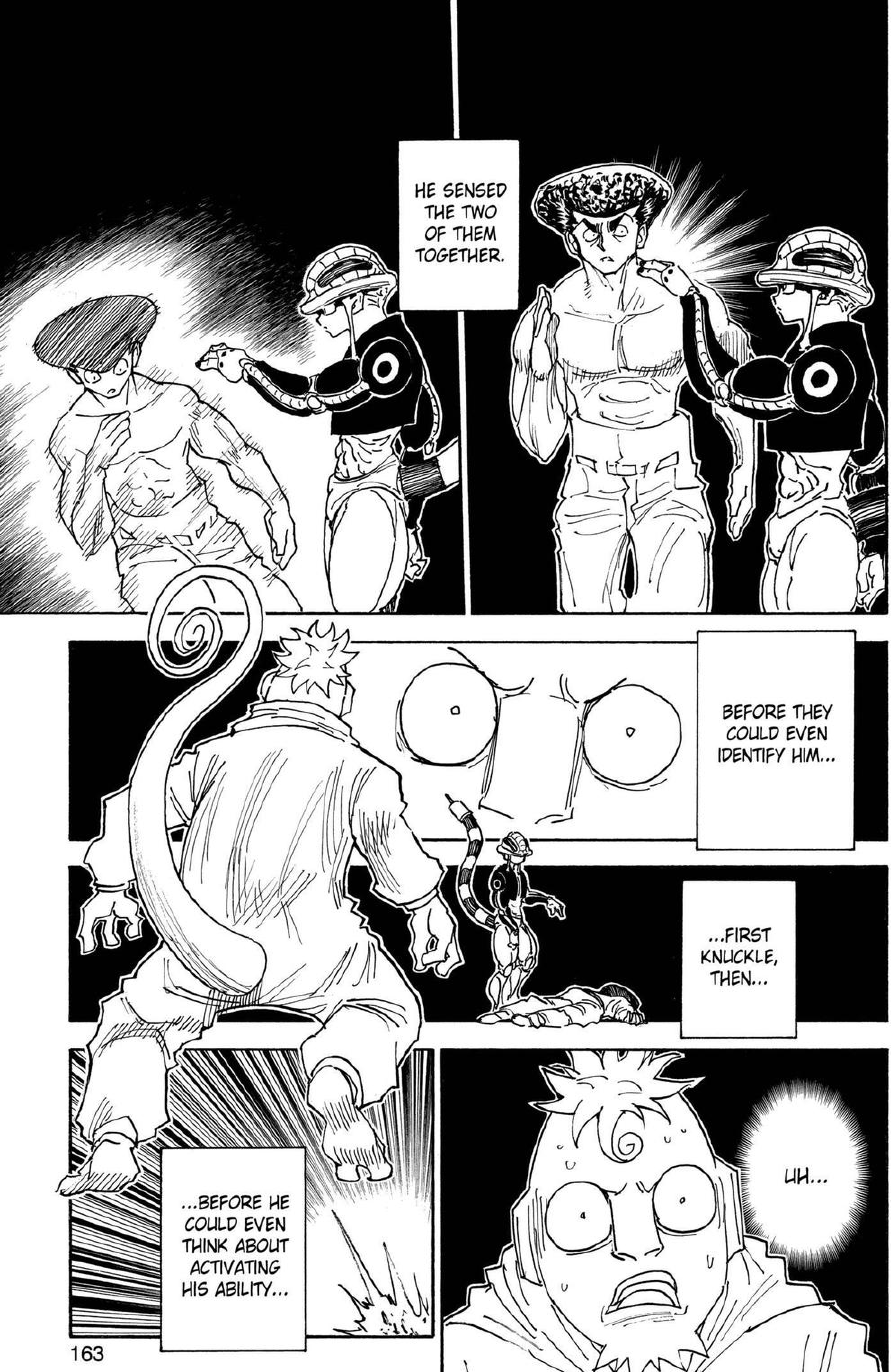

WE'RE GONNA NEED SERIOUS MILITARY POWER—AT THE STATE LEVEL!!
MELEORON!! BLEND INTO THE CROWD AND RUN BACK TO PEIJIN!!
SHF
SHF
SHF
ARE YOU KIDDING ME? WHAT ABOUT THE OTHERS?
THEY FELT IT TOO!!
THIS BATTLE IS OVER!!
THEY'LL HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO RUN!!
IT'S...IT'S BEYOND ANYTHING WE CAN DO!!
BUT WITH OUR COMBO...
SURE, FOR THE FIRST SHOT!
WE CAN PUT A.P.R. ON HIM. THEN WHAT?
IT ONLY COUNTS DOWN WHILE I'M WITHIN A 50-METER RADIUS!!
WITHIN 50 METERS OF THAT? UNTIL HE GOES BANKRUPT, WITHOUT US GETTING HIT ONCE?
UNLESS YOU HAVE THE BOSS'S LUNGS, IT AIN'T HAPPENING!!
BESIDES, THE SITUATION'S CHANGED!!
THEY KNOW ABOUT US NOW!! THEY KNOW OUR ABILITIES!!
THEY'LL BE ABLE TO COUNTER US!!

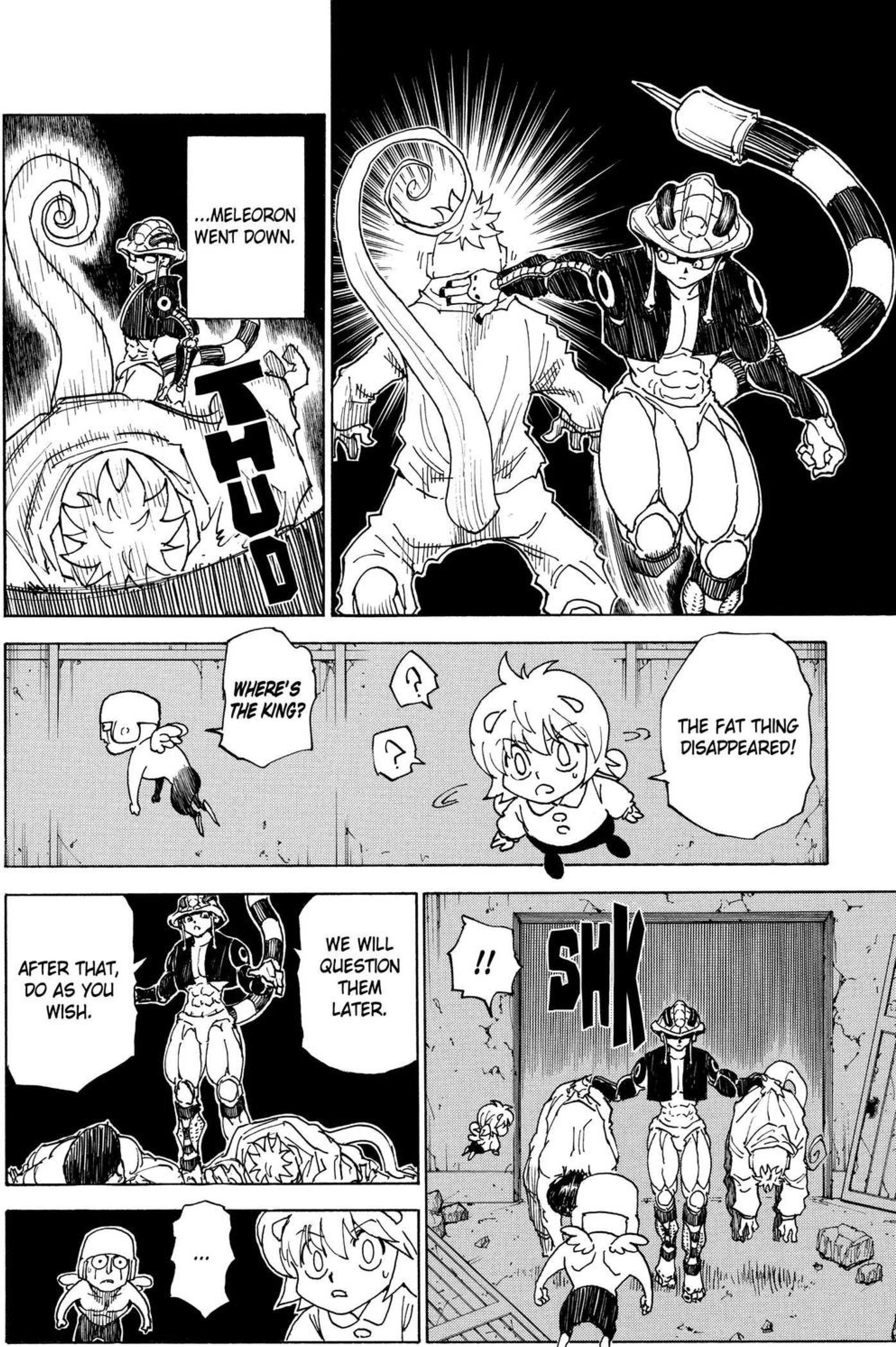

I'M SUCH AN IDIOT!! WHAT WE SHOULD BE DOING NOW...
...IS TELLING THE ASSOCIATION ABOUT THE LOSS OF THE CHAIRMAN SO THEY CAN IMPLEMENT PLAN B!
...
HURRY!!
REVENGE VERSUS DUTY.
THE DIFFERENCE IN MOTIVE BETWEEN MELEORON AND KNUCKLE...
...MADE THE DIFFERENCE IN THEIR STEPS AND SPEED.

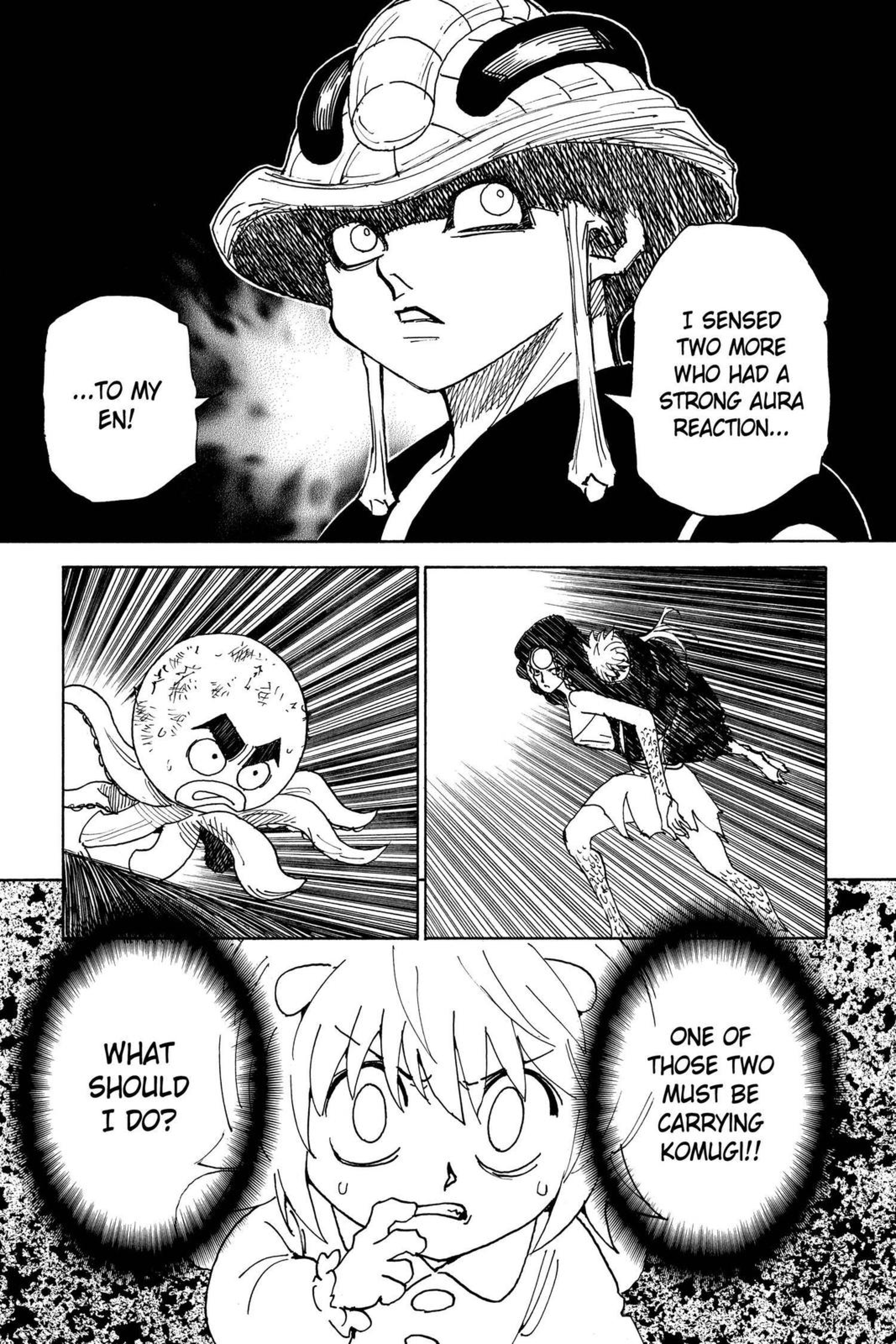
JUST THEN...

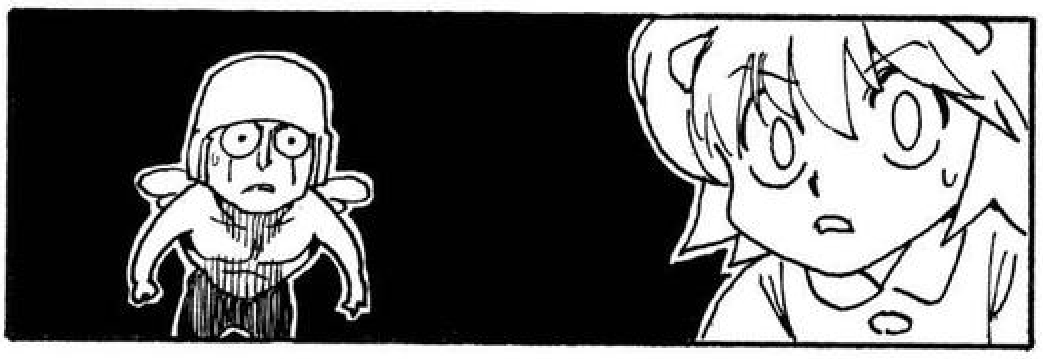

...MERUEM'S EN LIT UP THE PALACE...
FASH
...AT THE SPEED OF A FLASH OF LIGHT.


FFT

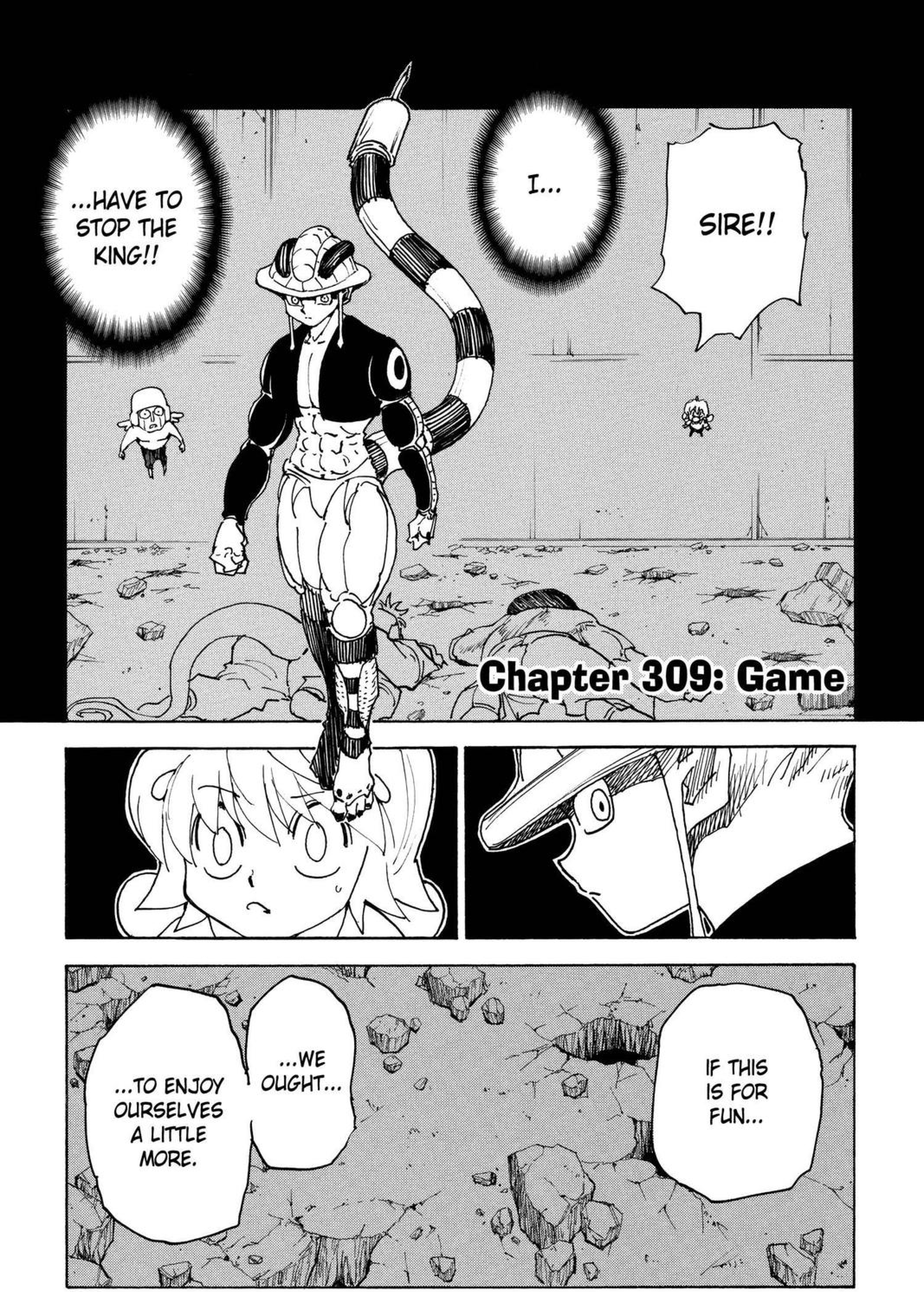

HE SENSED THE TWO OF THEM TOGETHER.
BEFORE THEY COULD EVEN IDENTIFY HIM...
...FIRST KNUCKLE, THEN...
UH...
...BEFORE HE COULD EVEN THINK ABOUT ACTIVATING HIS ABILITY...

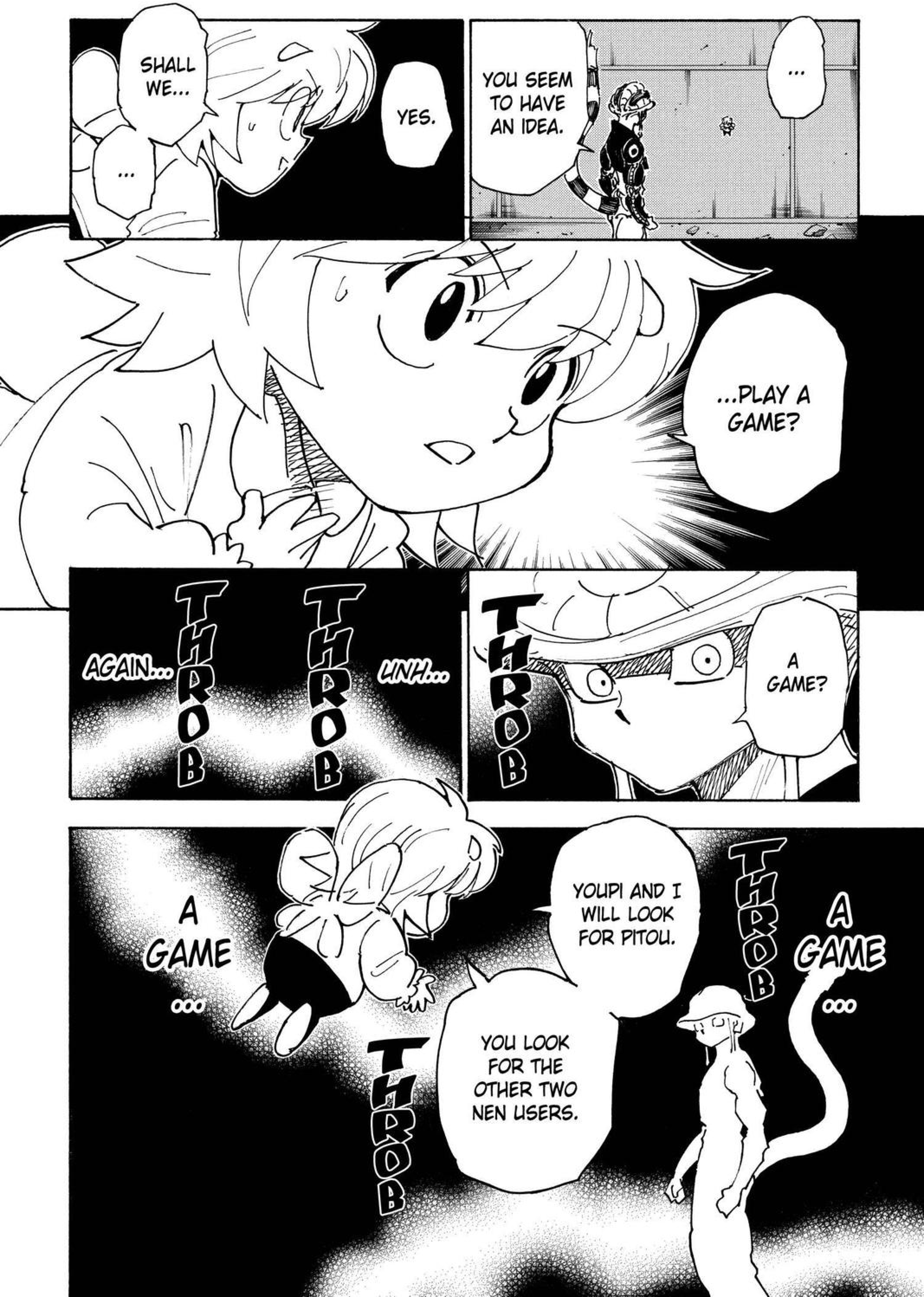

...MELEORON WENT DOWN.
THUD
THE FAT THING DISAPPEARED!
?
?
WHERE'S THE KING?
SHK
!!
WE WILL QUESTION THEM LATER.
AFTER THAT, DO AS YOU WISH.
...


I SENSED TWO MORE WHO HAD A STRONG AURA REACTION...
...TO MY EN!
ONE OF THOSE TWO MUST BE CARRYING KOMUGI!!
WHAT SHOULD I DO?

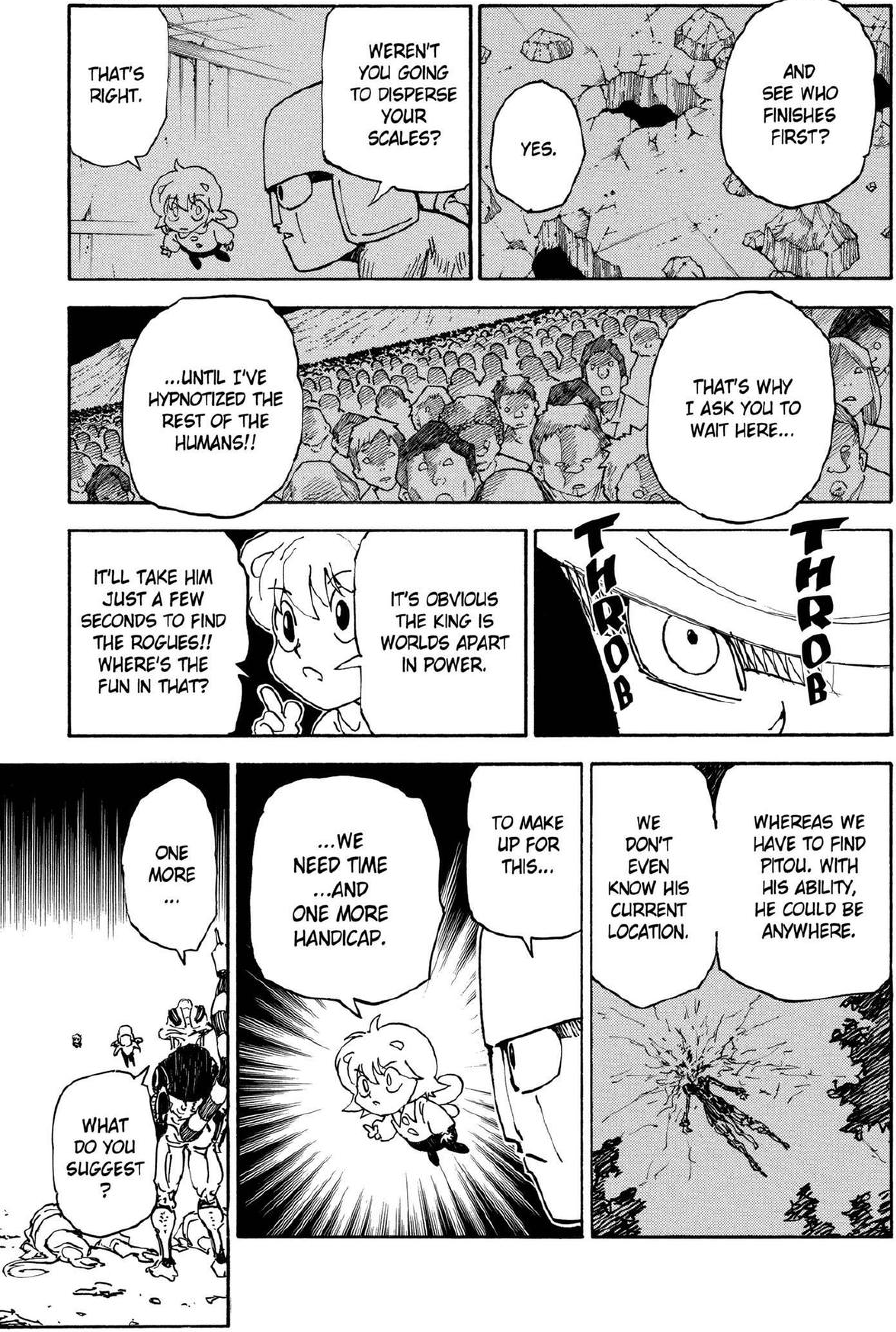


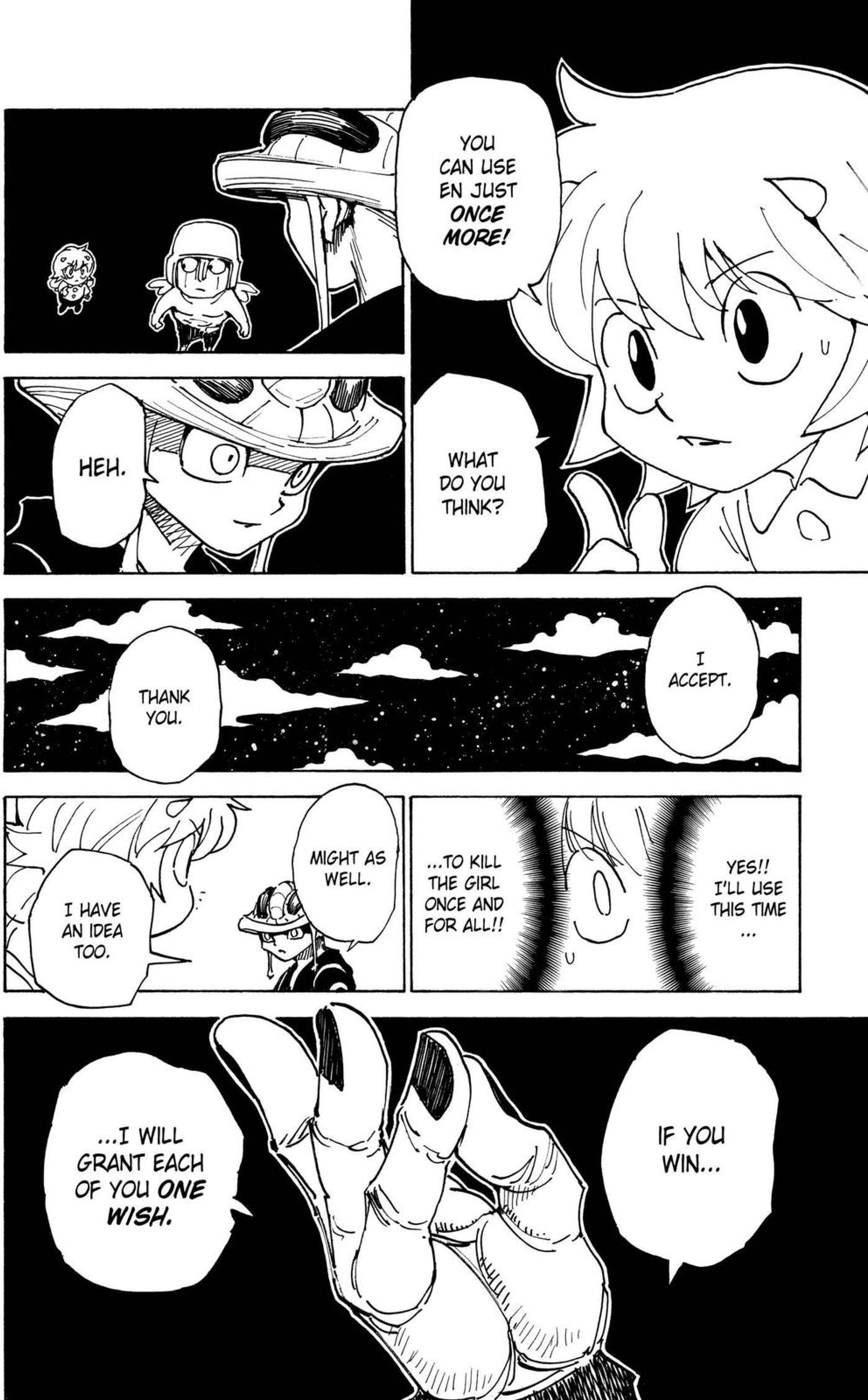
Chapter 309: Game

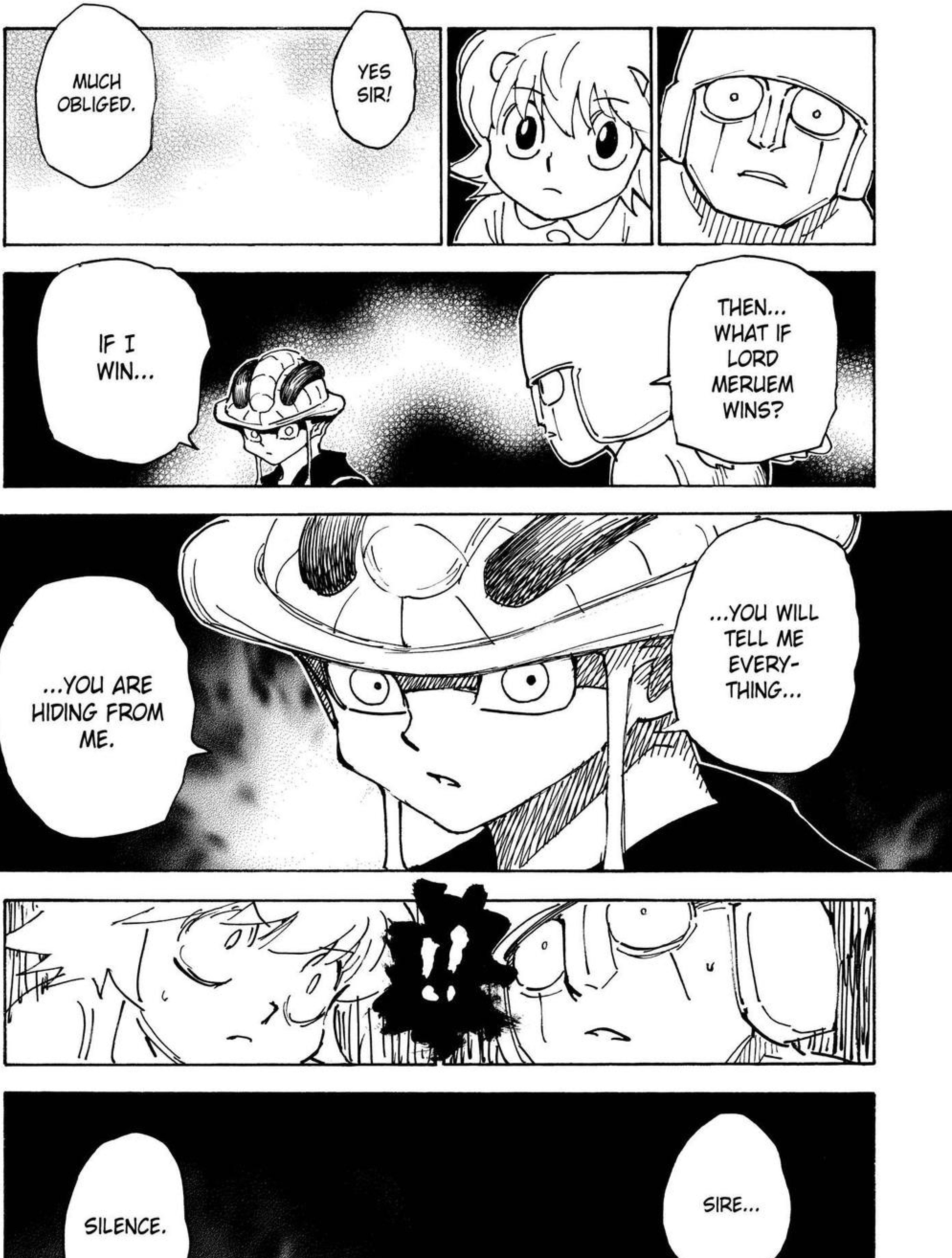

SIRE!!
I...
...HAVE TO STOP THE KING!!
IF THIS IS FOR FUN...
...WE OUGHT...
...TO ENJOY OURSELVES A LITTLE MORE.

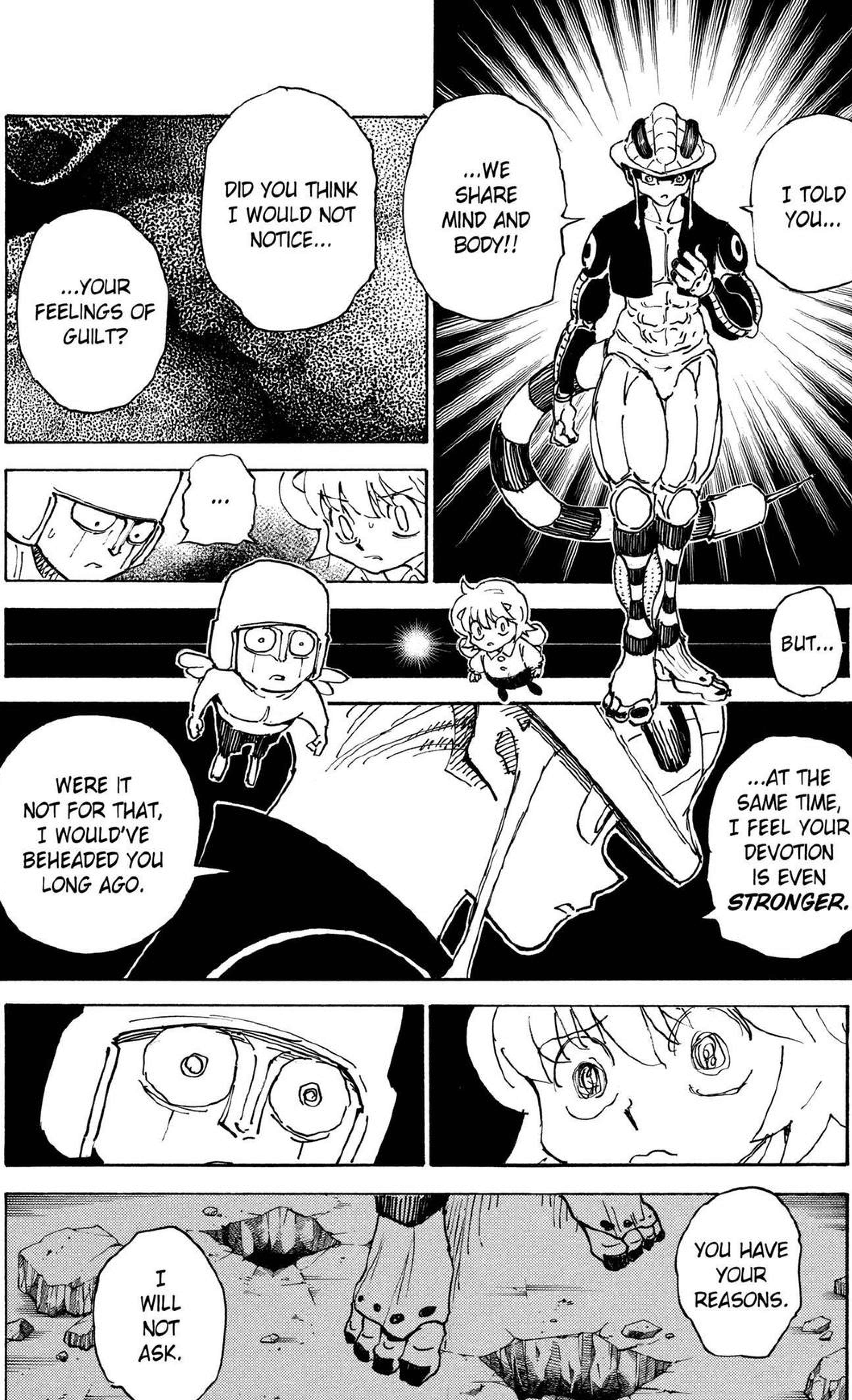

...
YOU SEEM TO HAVE AN IDEA.
YES.
SHALL WE...
...
...PLAY A GAME?
THROB
A GAME?
UNH...
THROB
THROB
AGAIN...
A GAME...
THROB
YOUPI AND I WILL LOOK FOR PITOU.
YOU LOOK FOR THE OTHER TWO NEN USERS.
THROB
A GAME...

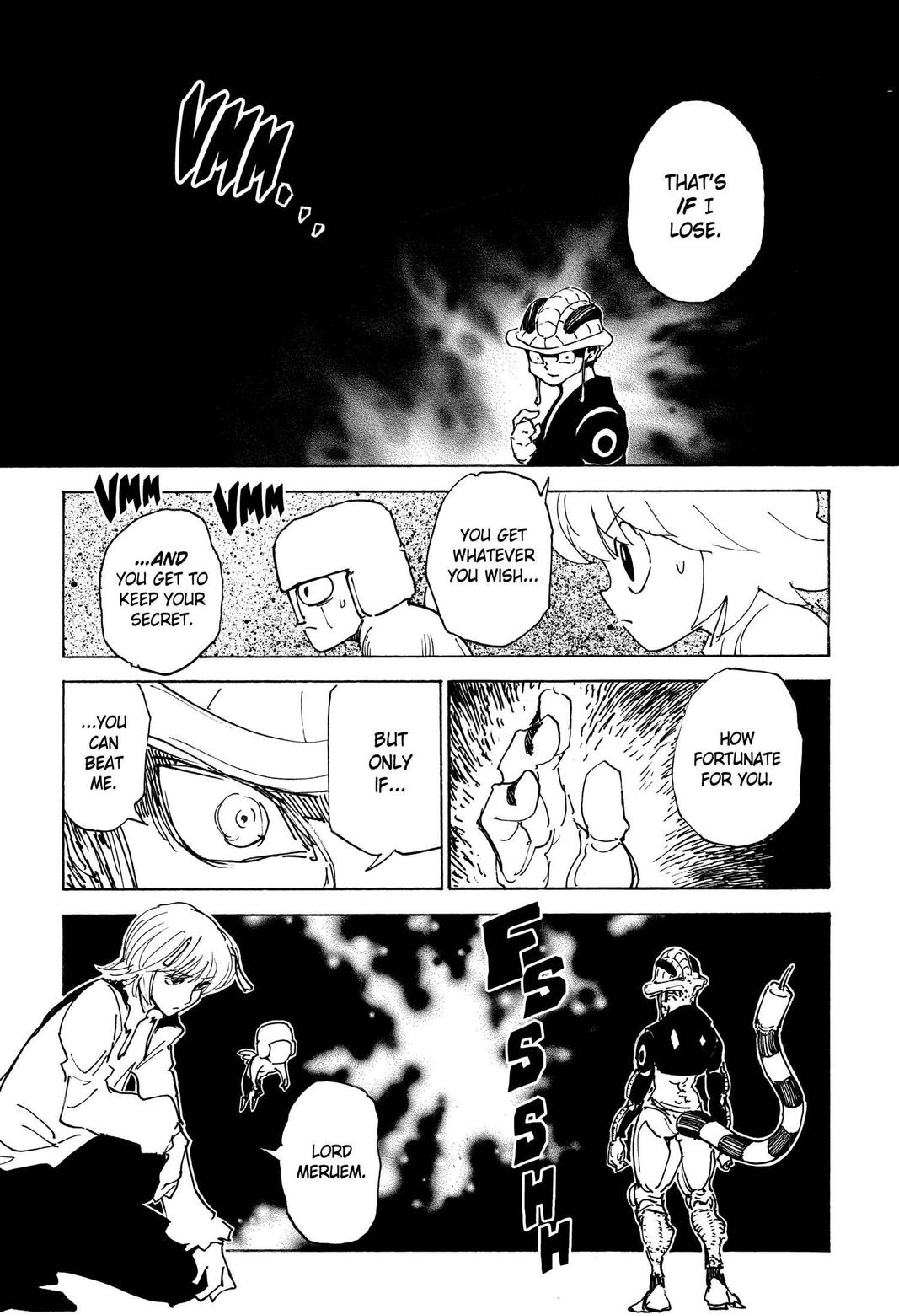
READ THIS WAY

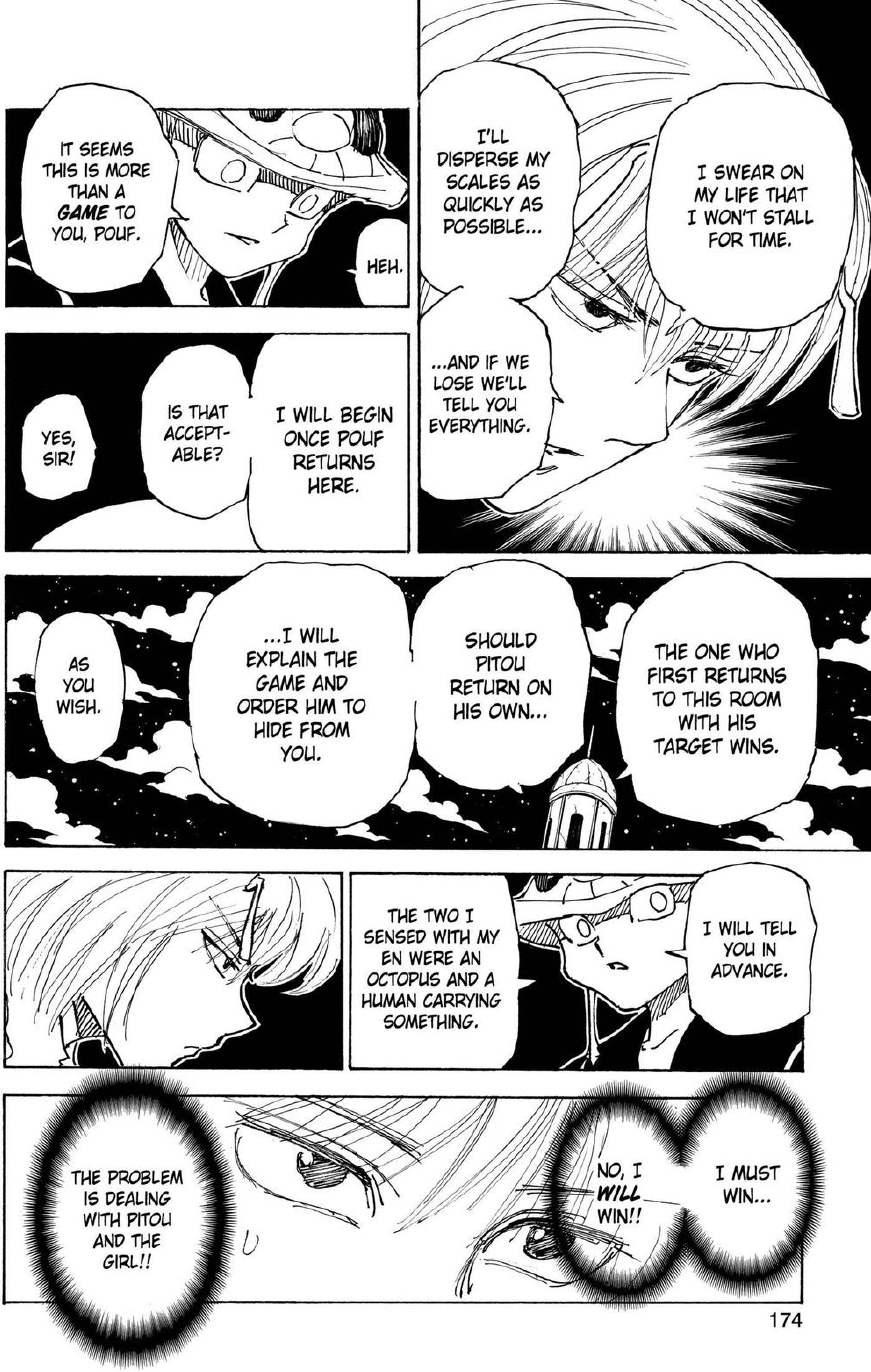

AND SEE WHO FINISHES FIRST?
YES.
WEREN'T YOU GOING TO DISPERSE YOUR SCALES?
THAT'S RIGHT.
THAT'S WHY I ASK YOU TO WAIT HERE...
...UNTIL I'VE HYPNOTIZED THE REST OF THE HUMANS!!
THROB THROB
IT'S OBVIOUS THE KING IS WORLDS APART IN POWER.
IT'LL TAKE HIM JUST A FEW SECONDS TO FIND THE ROGUES!! WHERE'S THE FUN IN THAT?
WHEREAS WE HAVE TO FIND PITOU. WITH HIS ABILITY, HE COULD BE ANYWHERE.
WE DON'T EVEN KNOW HIS CURRENT LOCATION.
TO MAKE UP FOR THIS...
...WE NEED TIME ...AND ONE MORE HANDICAP.
ONE MORE ...
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST ?

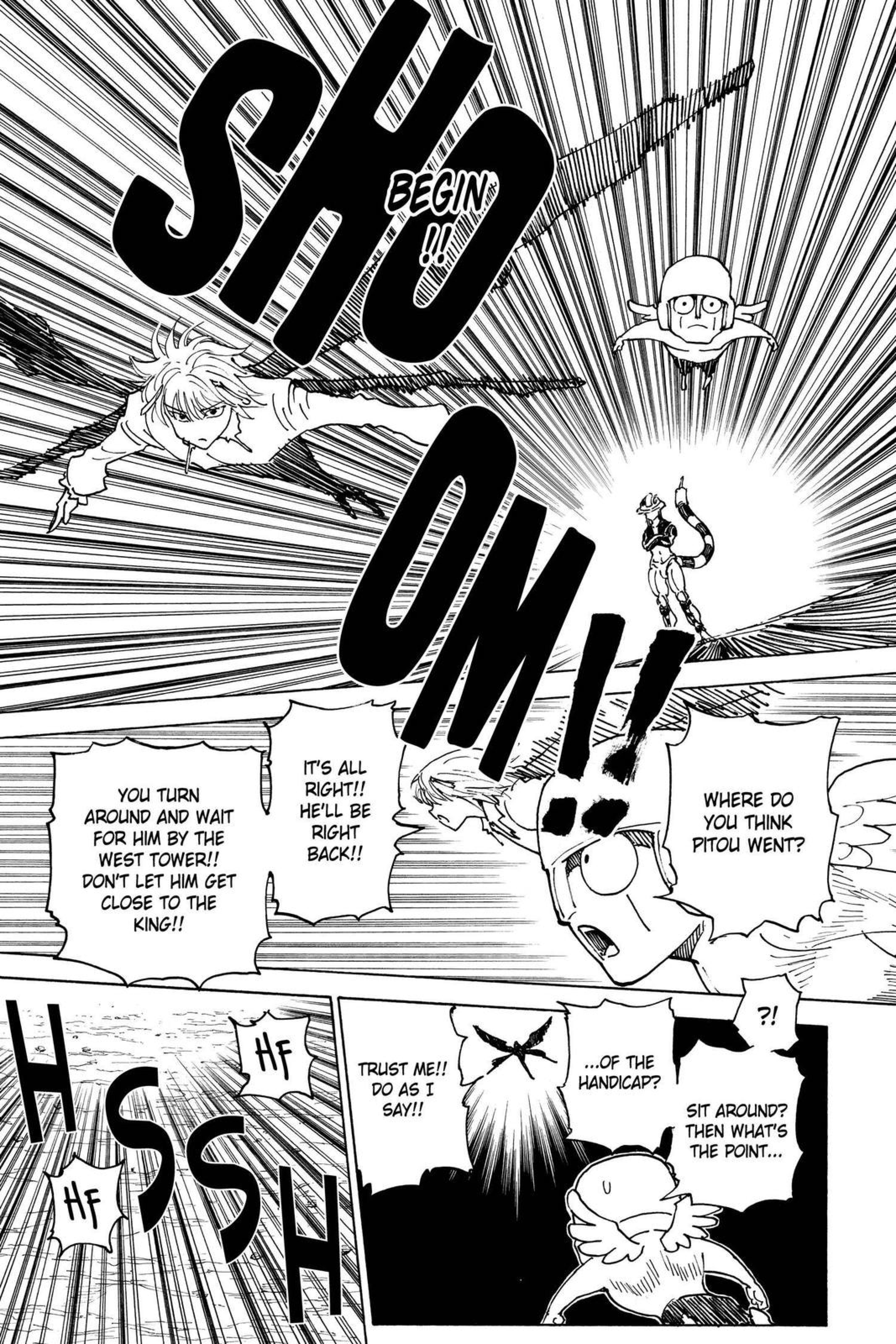

YOU CAN USE EN JUST *ONCE MORE!*
WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HEH.
I ACCEPT.
THANK YOU.
YES!! I'LL USE THIS TIME ...
...TO KILL THE GIRL ONCE AND FOR ALL!!
MIGHT AS WELL.
I HAVE AN IDEA TOO.
IF YOU WIN...
...I WILL GRANT EACH OF YOU ***ONE WISH.***

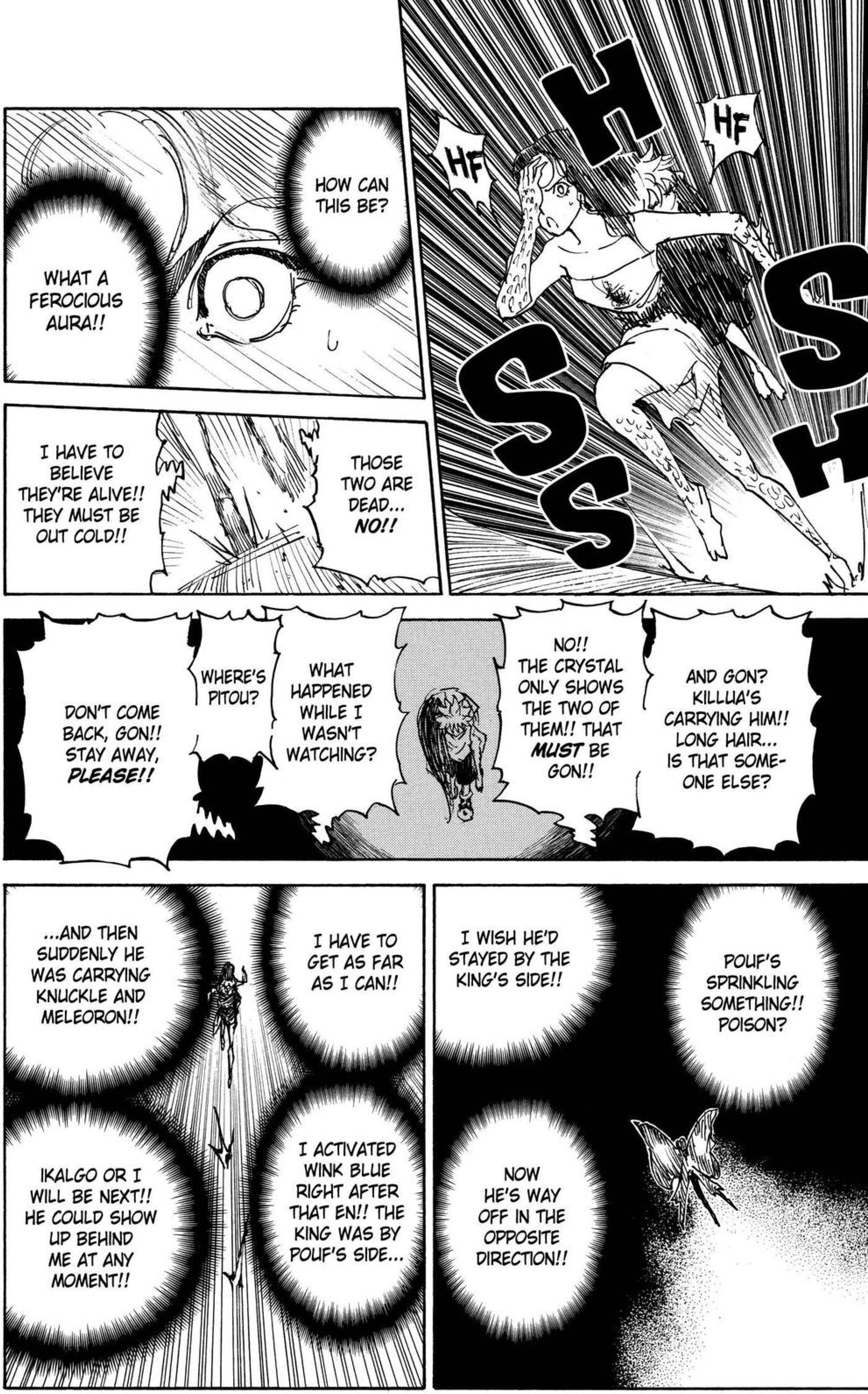

YES SIR!
MUCH OBLIGED.
THEN... WHAT IF LORD MERUEM WINS?
IF I WIN...
...YOU WILL TELL ME EVERYTHING...
...YOU ARE HIDING FROM ME.
SIRE...
SILENCE.

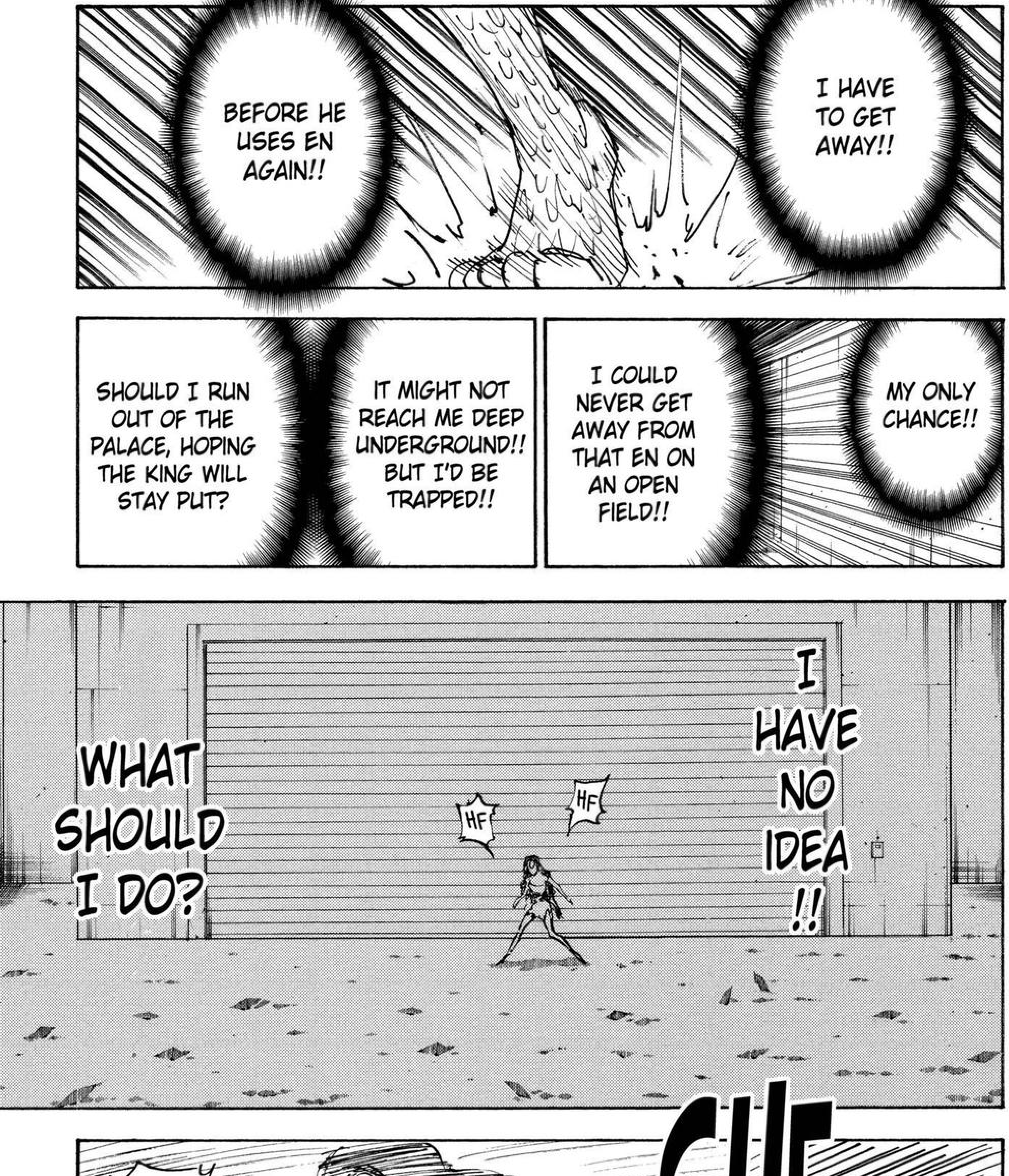

I TOLD YOU...
...WE SHARE MIND AND BODY!!
DID YOU THINK I WOULD NOT NOTICE...
...YOUR FEELINGS OF GUILT?
...
BUT...
...AT THE SAME TIME, I FEEL YOUR DEVOTION IS EVEN **STRONGER.**
WERE IT NOT FOR THAT, I WOULD'VE BEHEADED YOU LONG AGO.
YOU HAVE YOUR REASONS.
I WILL NOT ASK.

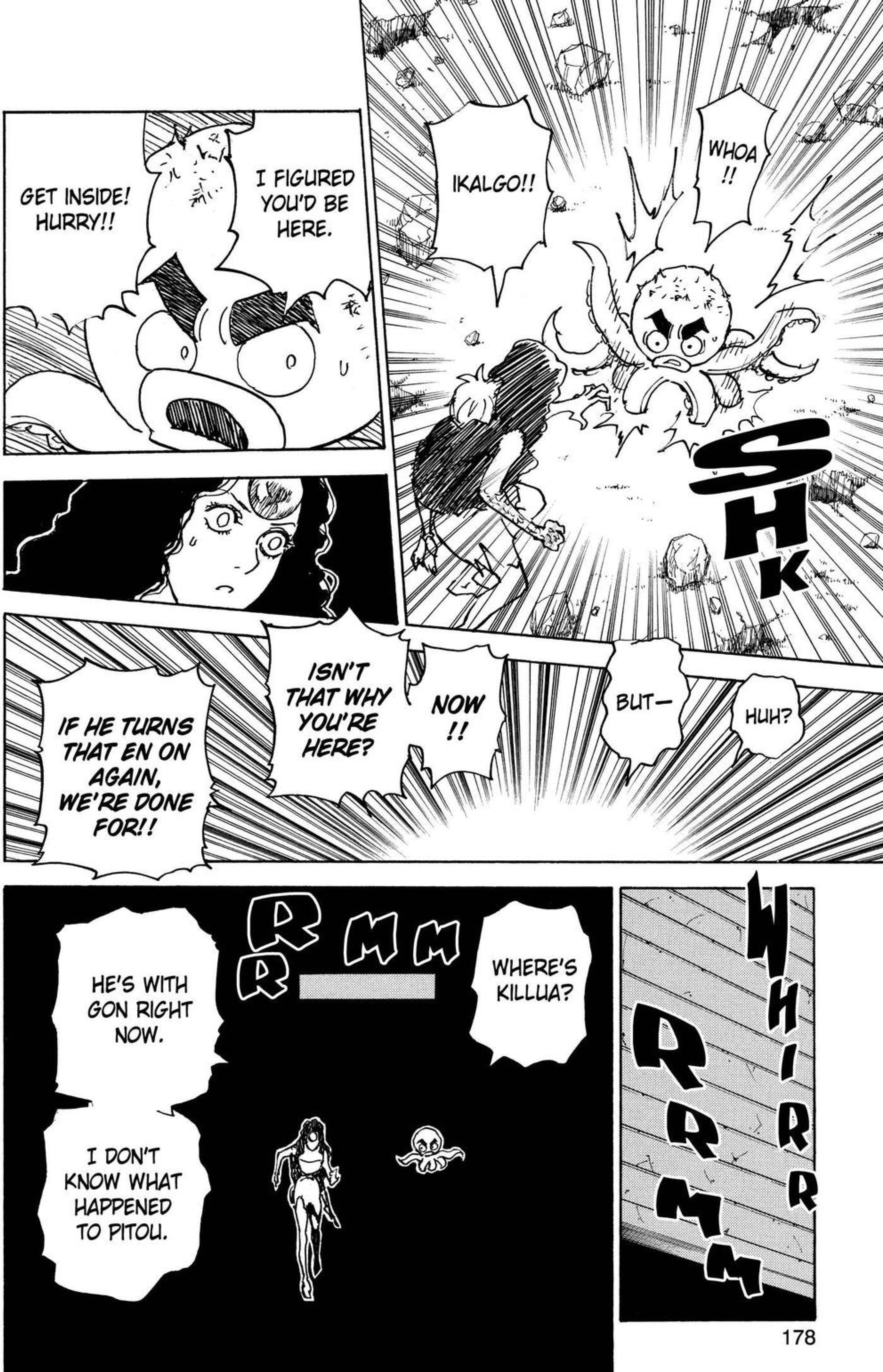

VMM...
THAT'S *IF* I LOSE.
YOU GET WHATEVER YOU WISH...
VMM VMM
...AND YOU GET TO KEEP YOUR SECRET.
HOW FORTUNATE FOR YOU.
BUT ONLY IF...
...YOU CAN BEAT ME.
FSSSHH
LORD MERUEM.

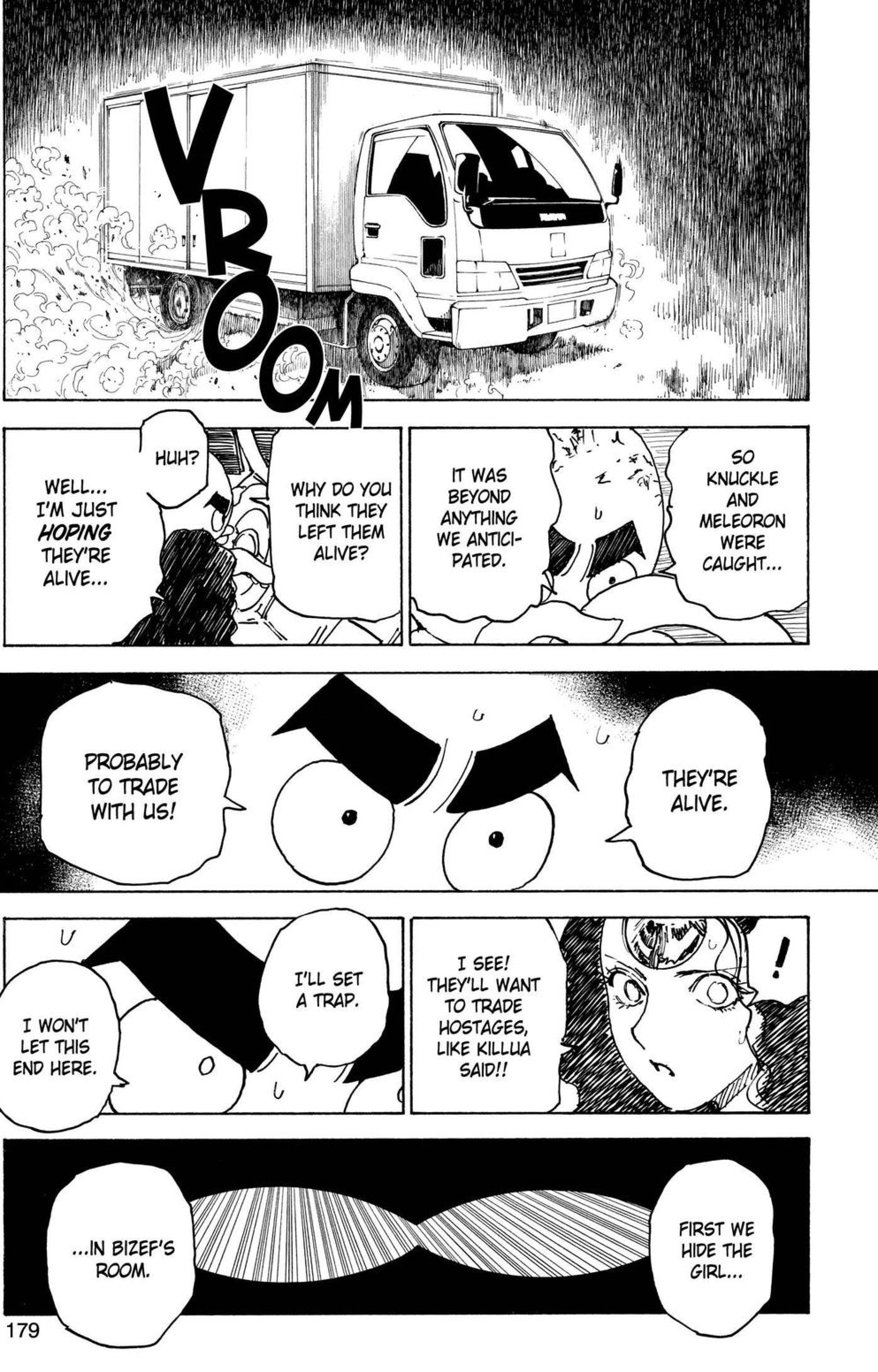

I SWEAR ON MY LIFE THAT I WON'T STALL FOR TIME.
I'LL DISPERSE MY SCALES AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE...
...AND IF WE LOSE WE'LL TELL YOU EVERYTHING.
HEH.
IT SEEMS THIS IS MORE THAN A **GAME** TO YOU, POUF.
I WILL BEGIN ONCE POUF RETURNS HERE.
IS THAT ACCEPTABLE?
YES, SIR!
THE ONE WHO FIRST RETURNS TO THIS ROOM WITH HIS TARGET WINS.
SHOULD PITOU RETURN ON HIS OWN...
...I WILL EXPLAIN THE GAME AND ORDER HIM TO HIDE FROM YOU.
AS YOU WISH.
I WILL TELL YOU IN ADVANCE.
THE TWO I SENSED WITH MY EN WERE AN OCTOPUS AND A HUMAN CARRYING SOMETHING.
I MUST WIN...
NO, I **WILL** WIN!!
THE PROBLEM IS DEALING WITH PITOU AND THE GIRL!!

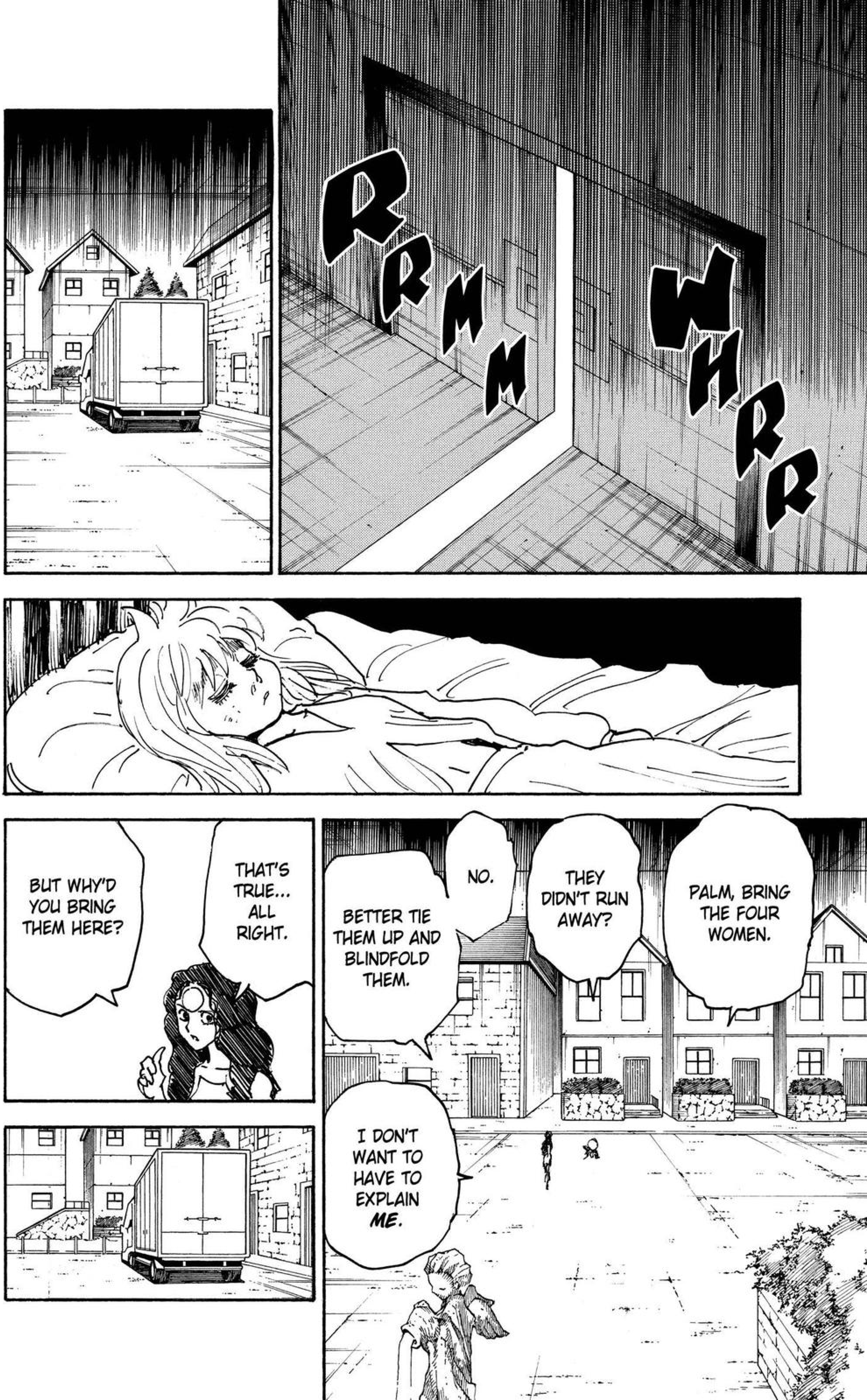

SHOOM!!
BEGIN!!
WHERE DO YOU THINK PITOU WENT?
IT'S ALL RIGHT!! HE'LL BE RIGHT BACK!!
YOU TURN AROUND AND WAIT FOR HIM BY THE WEST TOWER!! DON'T LET HIM GET CLOSE TO THE KING!!
?!
SIT AROUND? THEN WHAT'S THE POINT...
...OF THE HANDICAP?
TRUST ME!! DO AS I SAY!!
HSSH
HF
HF

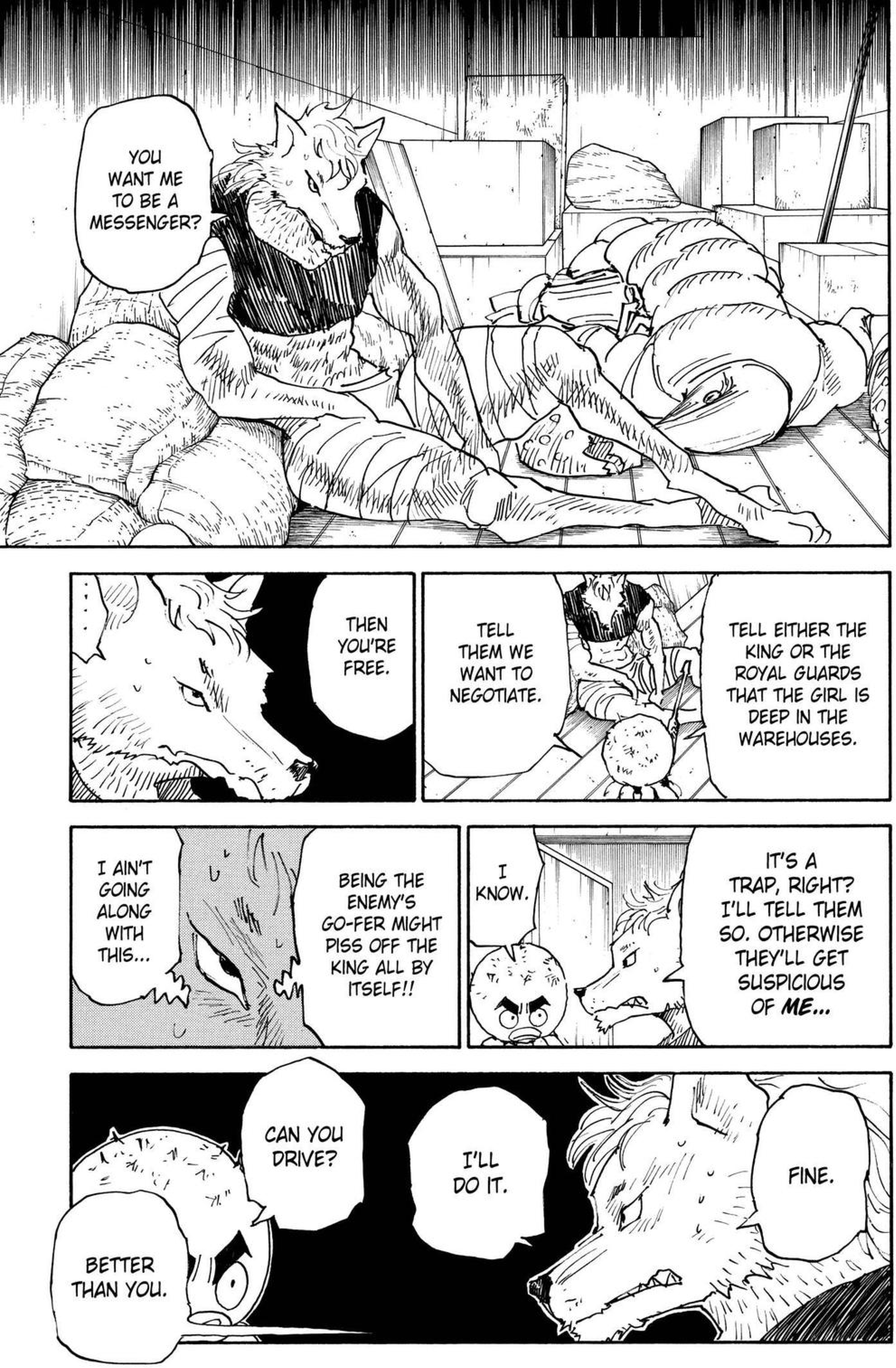

HF
H
HF
SSS
HOW CAN THIS BE?
WHAT A FEROCIOUS AURA!!
THOSE TWO ARE DEAD... *NO!!*
I HAVE TO BELIEVE THEY'RE ALIVE!! THEY MUST BE OUT COLD!!
AND GON? KILLUA'S CARRYING HIM!! LONG HAIR... IS THAT SOMEONE ELSE?
NO!! THE CRYSTAL ONLY SHOWS THE TWO OF THEM!! THAT *MUST* BE GON!!
WHAT HAPPENED WHILE I WASN'T WATCHING?
WHERE'S PITOU?
DON'T COME BACK, GON!! STAY AWAY, *PLEASE!!*
POUF'S SPRINKLING SOMETHING!! POISON?
I WISH HE'D STAYED BY THE KING'S SIDE!!
NOW HE'S WAY OFF IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION!!
I HAVE TO GET AS FAR AS I CAN!!
...AND THEN SUDDENLY HE WAS CARRYING KNUCKLE AND MELEORON!!
I ACTIVATED WINK BLUE RIGHT AFTER THAT EN!! THE KING WAS BY POUF'S SIDE...
IKALGO OR I WILL BE NEXT!! HE COULD SHOW UP BEHIND ME AT ANY MOMENT!!

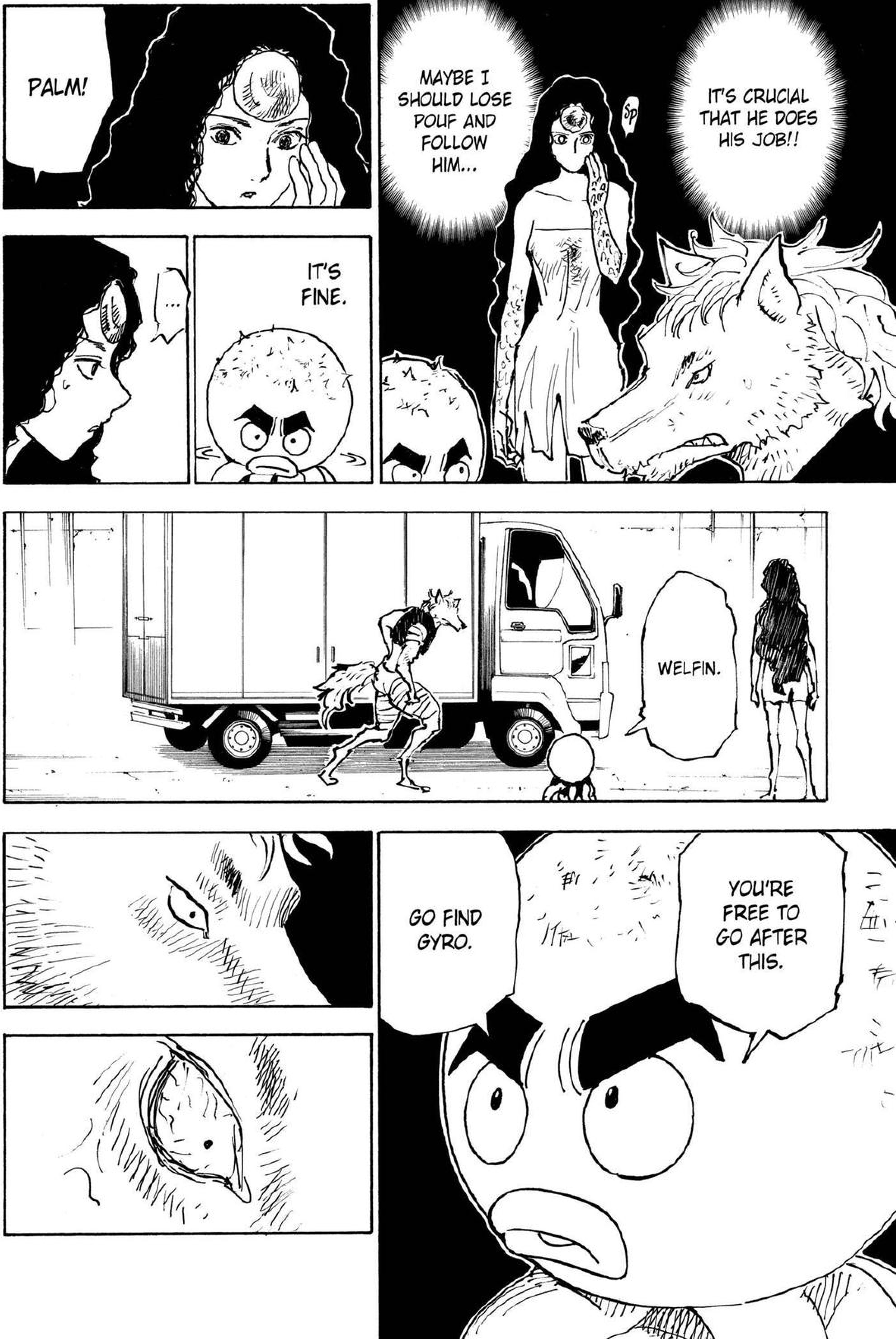

I HAVE TO GET AWAY!!
BEFORE HE USES EN AGAIN!!
MY ONLY CHANCE!!
I COULD NEVER GET AWAY FROM THAT EN ON AN OPEN FIELD!!
IT MIGHT NOT REACH ME DEEP UNDERGROUND!! BUT I'D BE TRAPPED!!
SHOULD I RUN OUT OF THE PALACE, HOPING THE KING WILL STAY PUT?
I HAVE NO IDEA!!
HF
HF
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
SHF
!!

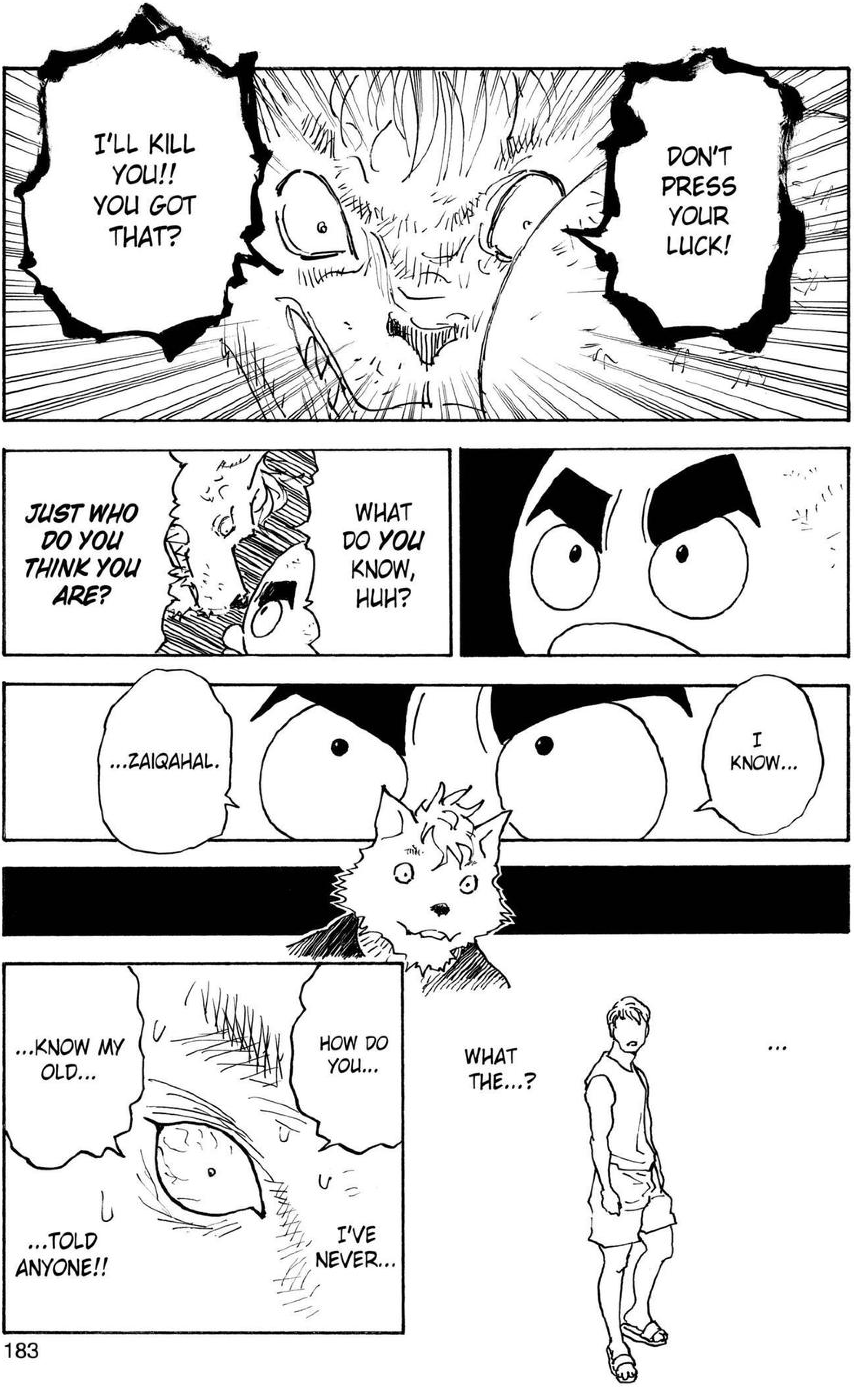

WHOA!!
IKALGO!!
SHK
I FIGURED YOU'D BE HERE.
GET INSIDE! HURRY!!
HUH?
BUT—
NOW!!
ISN'T THAT WHY YOU'RE HERE?
IF HE TURNS THAT EN ON AGAIN, WE'RE DONE FOR!!
WHIRRRRMM
RRMMM
WHERE'S KILLUA?
HE'S WITH GON RIGHT NOW.
I DON'T KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO PITOU.

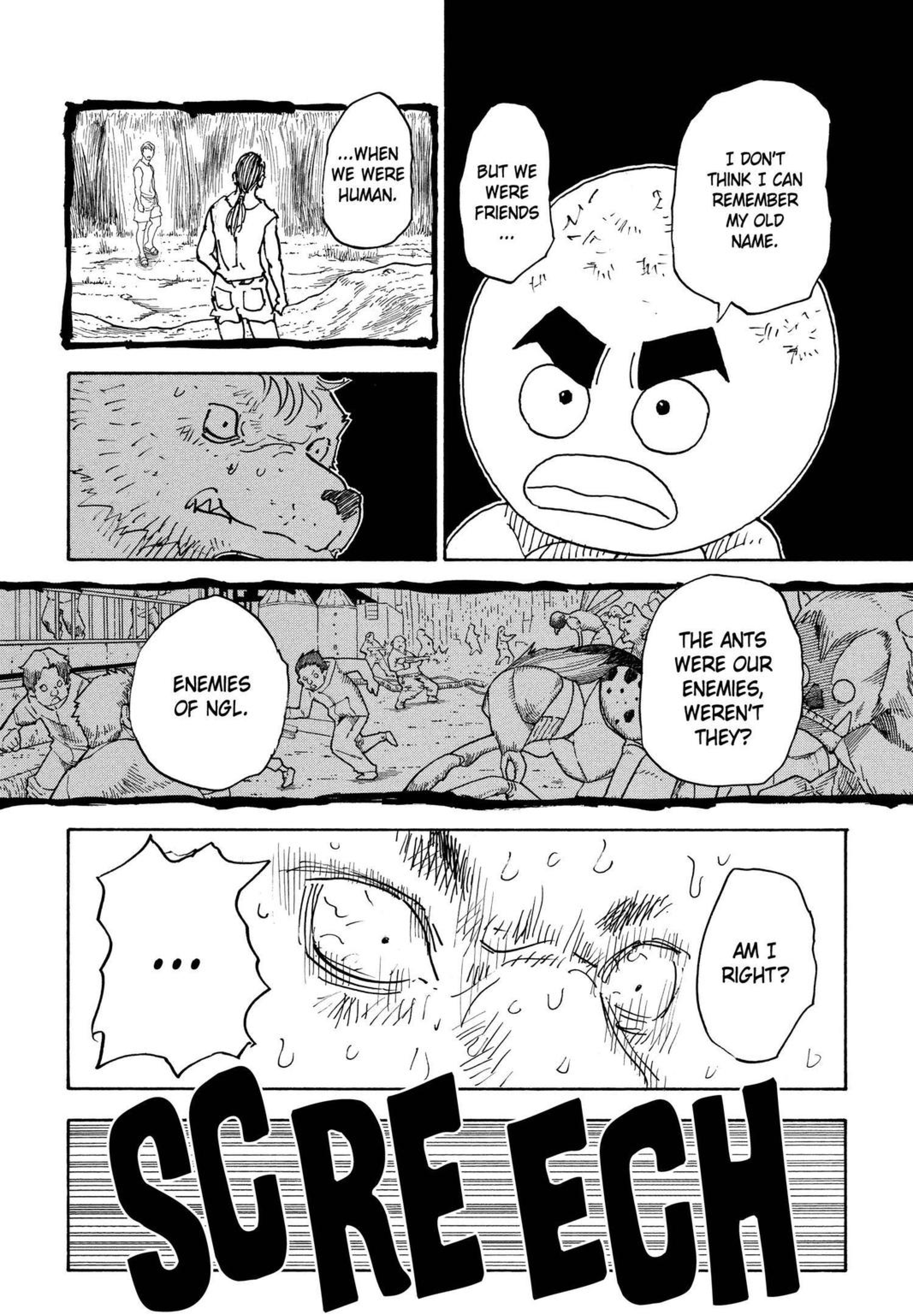

VROOM
SO KNUCKLE AND MELEORON WERE CAUGHT...
IT WAS BEYOND ANYTHING WE ANTICIPATED.
WHY DO YOU THINK THEY LEFT THEM ALIVE?
HUH?
WELL... I'M JUST *HOPING* THEY'RE ALIVE...
THEY'RE ALIVE.
PROBABLY TO TRADE WITH US!
!
I SEE! THEY'LL WANT TO TRADE HOSTAGES, LIKE KILLUA SAID!!
I'LL SET A TRAP.
I WON'T LET THIS END HERE.
FIRST WE HIDE THE GIRL...
...IN BIZEF'S ROOM.

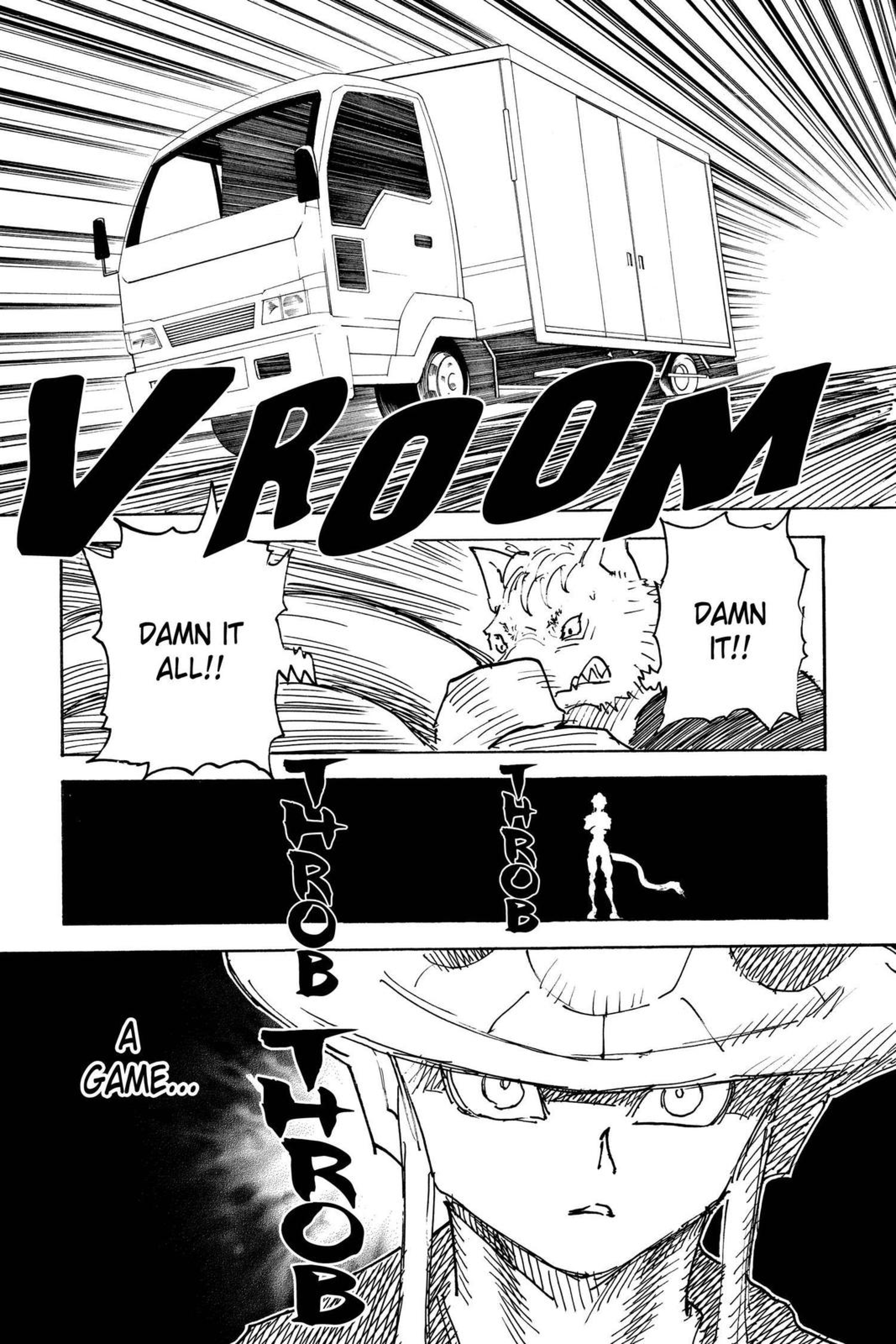

WHRR
RRMMM
PALM, BRING THE FOUR WOMEN.
THEY DIDN'T RUN AWAY?
NO.
BETTER TIE THEM UP AND BLINDFOLD THEM.
I DON'T WANT TO HAVE TO EXPLAIN *ME*.
THAT'S TRUE... ALL RIGHT.
BUT WHY'D YOU BRING THEM HERE?

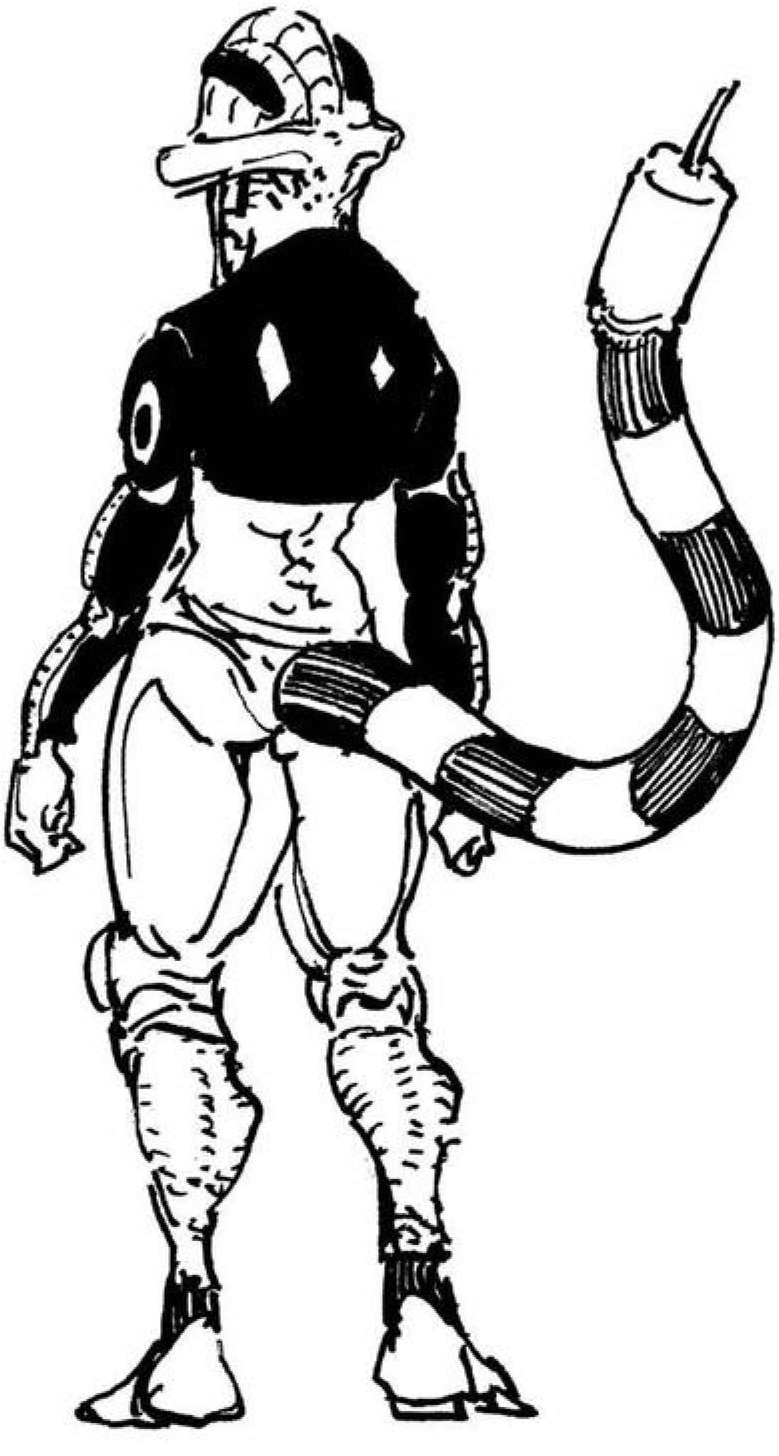

YOU WANT ME TO BE A MESSENGER?
TELL EITHER THE KING OR THE ROYAL GUARDS THAT THE GIRL IS DEEP IN THE WAREHOUSES.
TELL THEM WE WANT TO NEGOTIATE.
THEN YOU'RE FREE.
...
IT'S A TRAP, RIGHT? I'LL TELL THEM SO. OTHERWISE THEY'LL GET SUSPICIOUS OF **ME**...
I KNOW.
BEING THE ENEMY'S GO-FER MIGHT PISS OFF THE KING ALL BY ITSELF!!
I AIN'T GOING ALONG WITH THIS...
FINE.
I'LL DO IT.
CAN YOU DRIVE?
BETTER THAN YOU.


IT'S CRUCIAL THAT HE DOES HIS JOB!!
Sp
MAYBE I SHOULD LOSE POUF AND FOLLOW HIM...
PALM!
IT'S FINE.
...
WELFIN.
YOU'RE FREE TO GO AFTER THIS.
GO FIND GYRO.

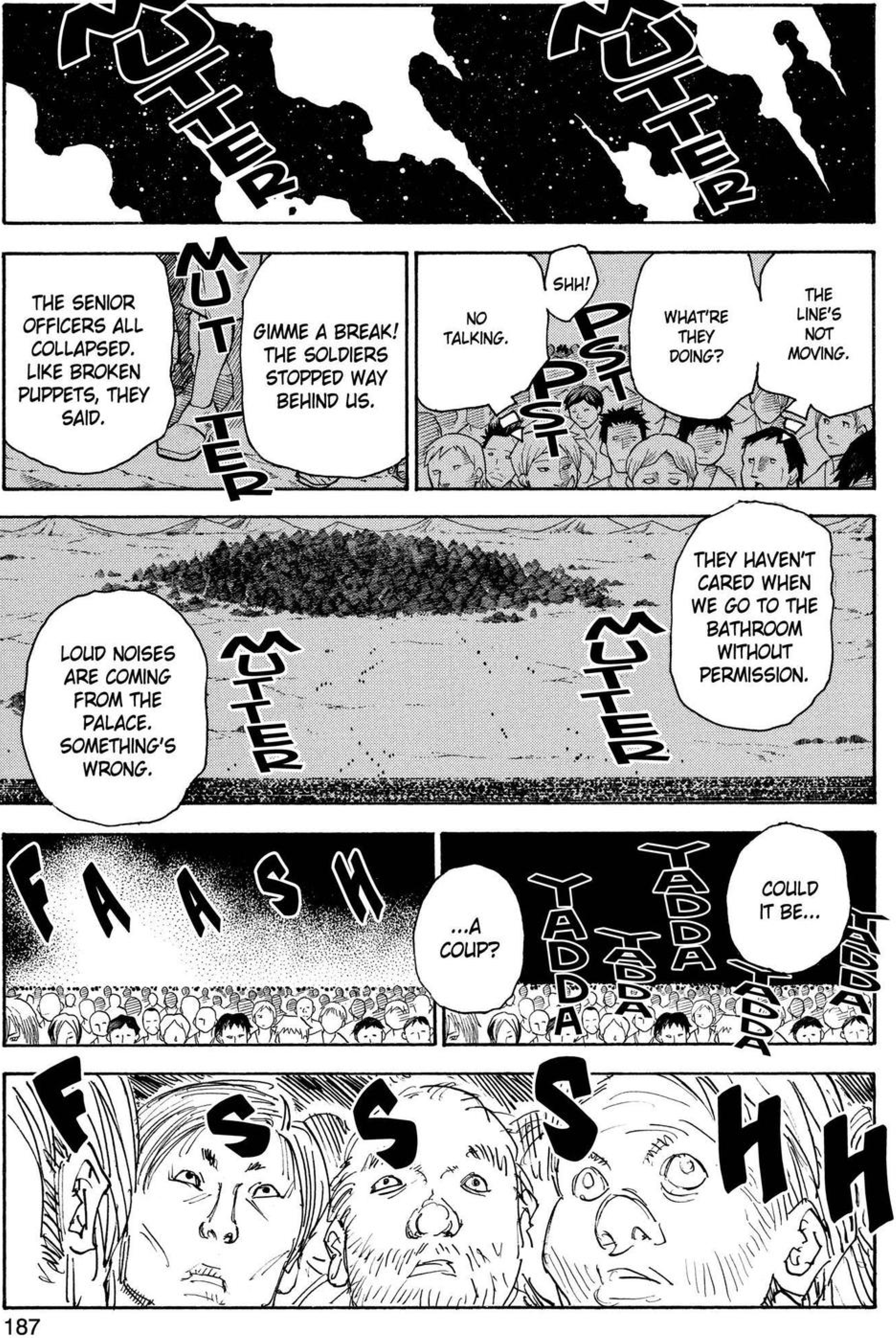

DON'T PRESS YOUR LUCK!
I'LL KILL YOU!! YOU GOT THAT?
WHAT DO *YOU* KNOW, HUH?
JUST WHO DO YOU THINK YOU ARE?
I KNOW...
...ZAIQAHAL.
...
WHAT THE...?
HOW DO YOU...
...KNOW MY OLD...
I'VE NEVER...
...TOLD ANYONE!!

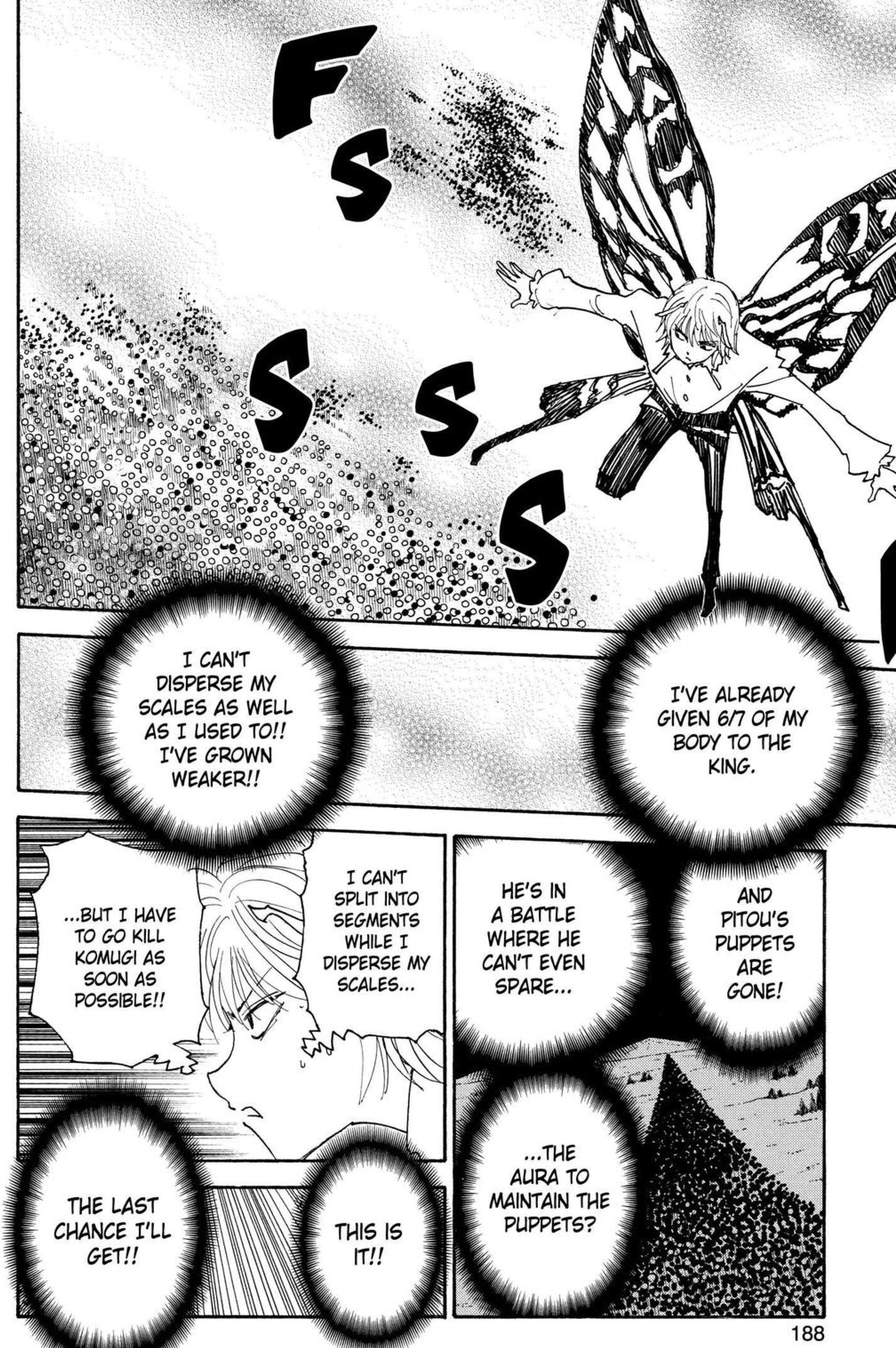

I DON'T THINK I CAN REMEMBER MY OLD NAME.
BUT WE WERE FRIENDS ...
...WHEN WE WERE HUMAN.
THE ANTS WERE OUR ENEMIES, WEREN'T THEY?
ENEMIES OF NGL.
AM I RIGHT?
...
SCREECH

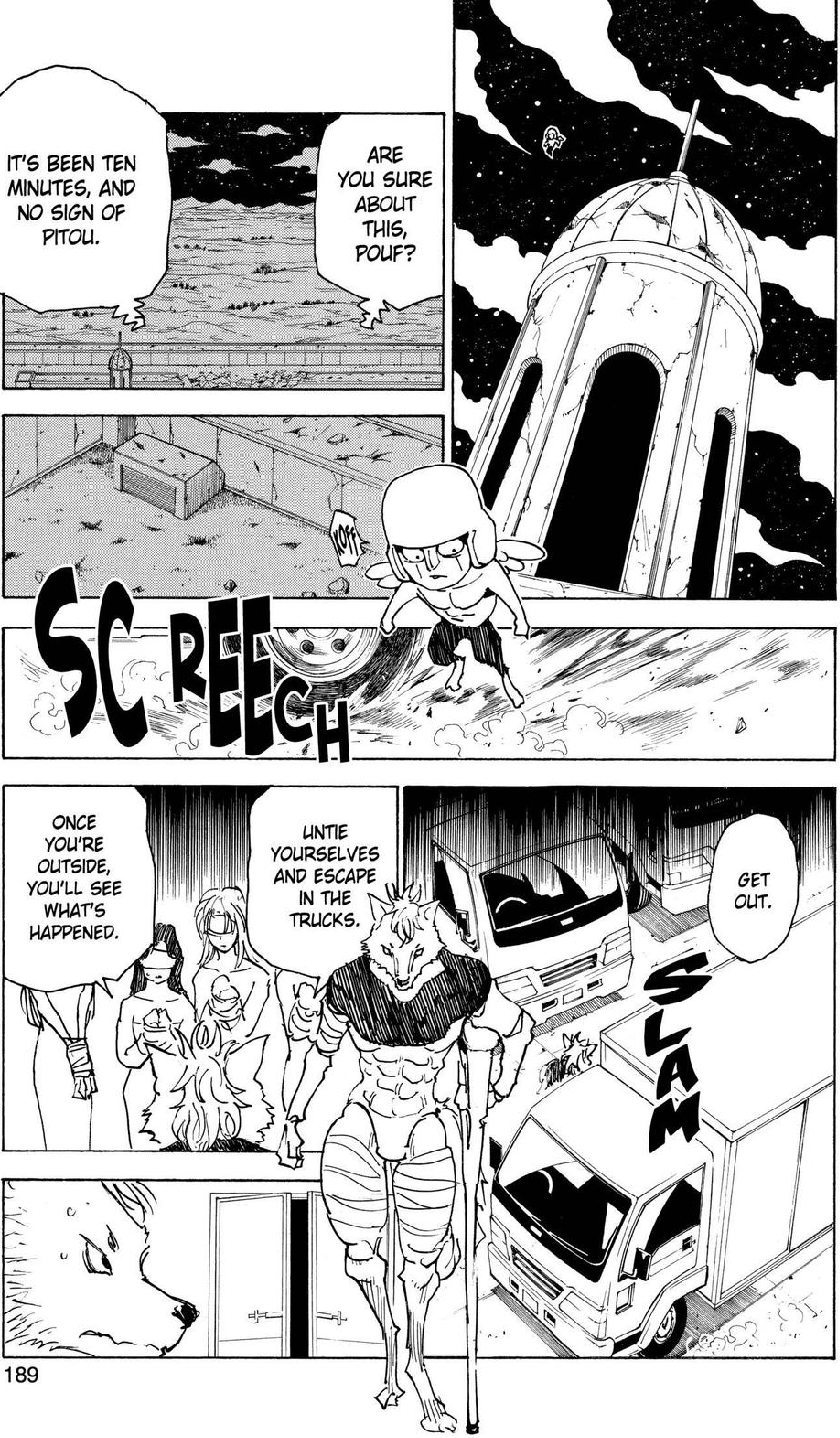

VROOM
DAMN IT!!
DAMN IT ALL!!
THROB
THROB
A GAME...
THROB

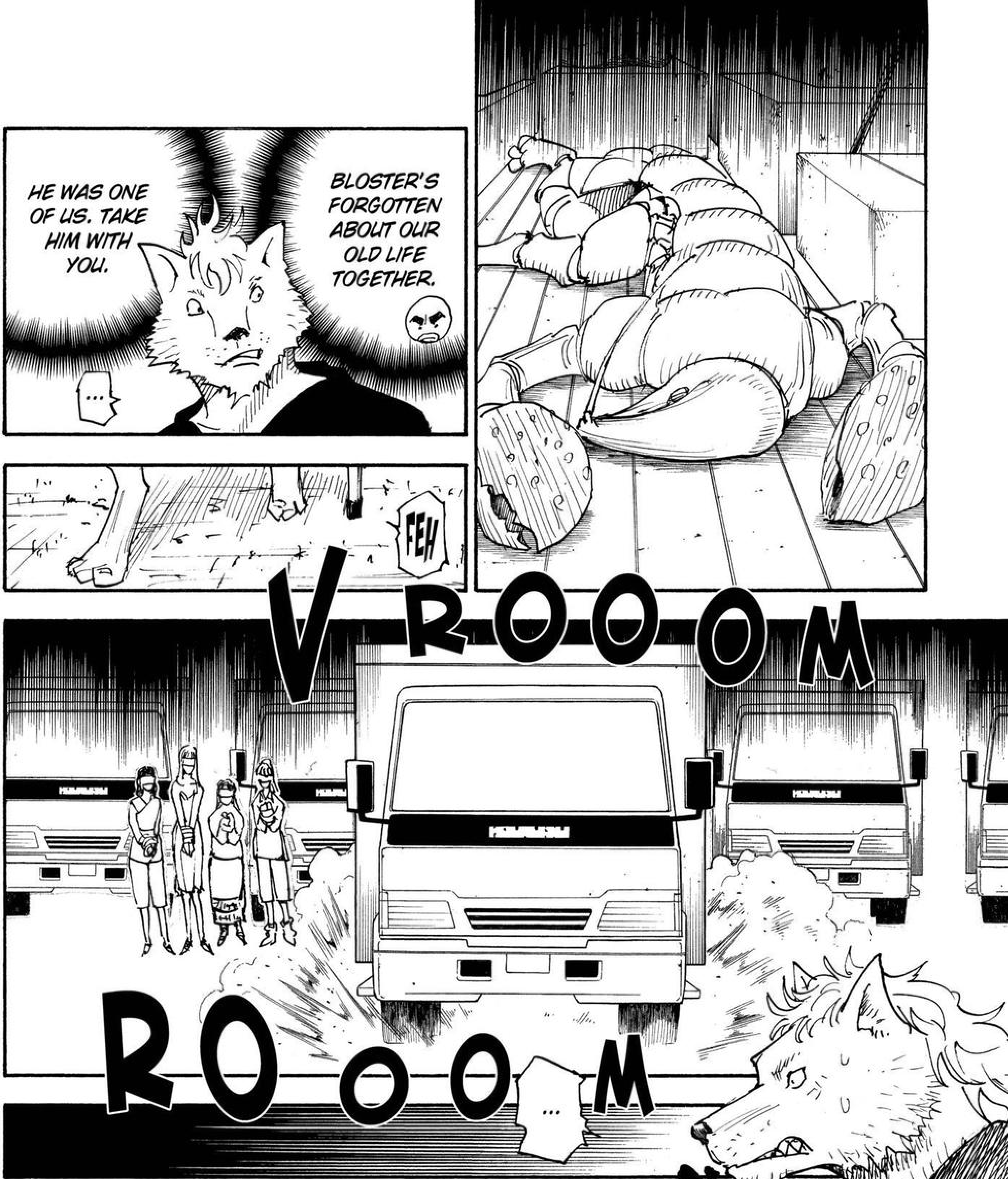


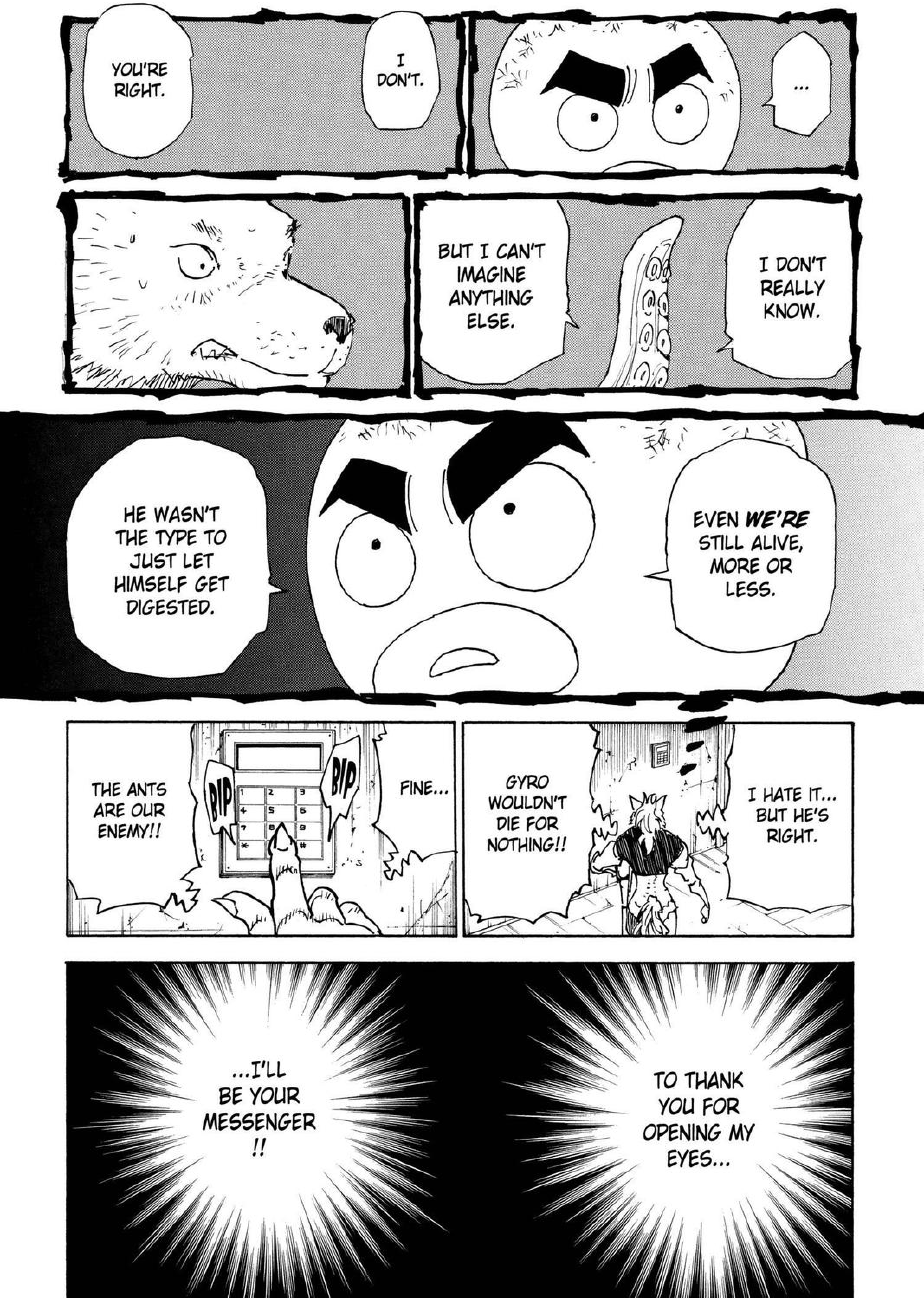
Chapter 310: Action

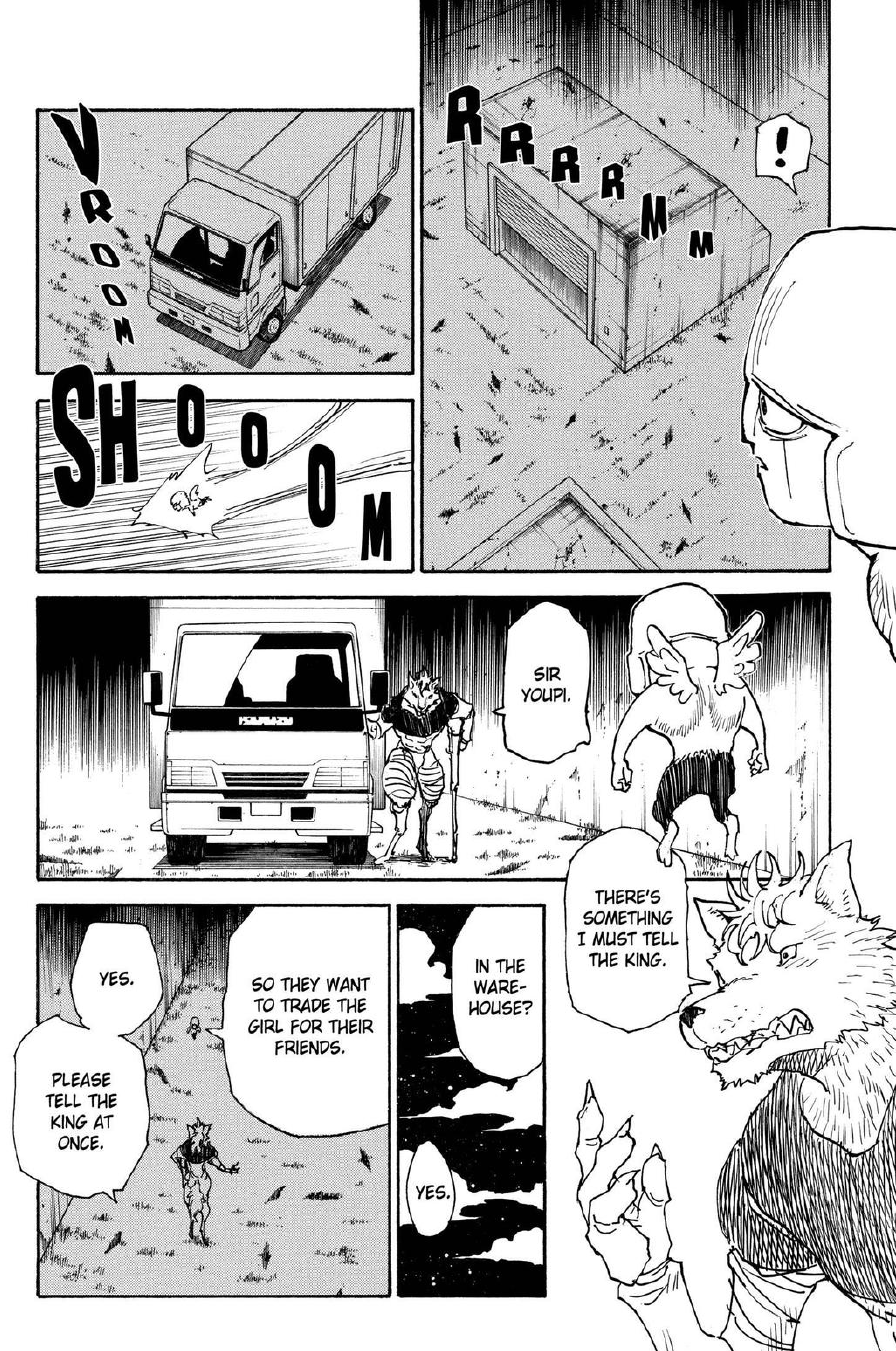

MUTTER
MUTTER
THE LINE'S NOT MOVING.
WHAT'RE THEY DOING?
SHH!
NO TALKING.
PST PST
GIMME A BREAK! THE SOLDIERS STOPPED WAY BEHIND US.
THE SENIOR OFFICERS ALL COLLAPSED. LIKE BROKEN PUPPETS, THEY SAID.
MUTTER
THEY HAVEN'T CARED WHEN WE GO TO THE BATHROOM WITHOUT PERMISSION.
MUTTER
MUTTER
LOUD NOISES ARE COMING FROM THE PALACE. SOMETHING'S WRONG.
COULD IT BE...
YADDA YADDA YADDA YADDA YADDA YADDA
...A COUP?
FAASH
FSSSHH

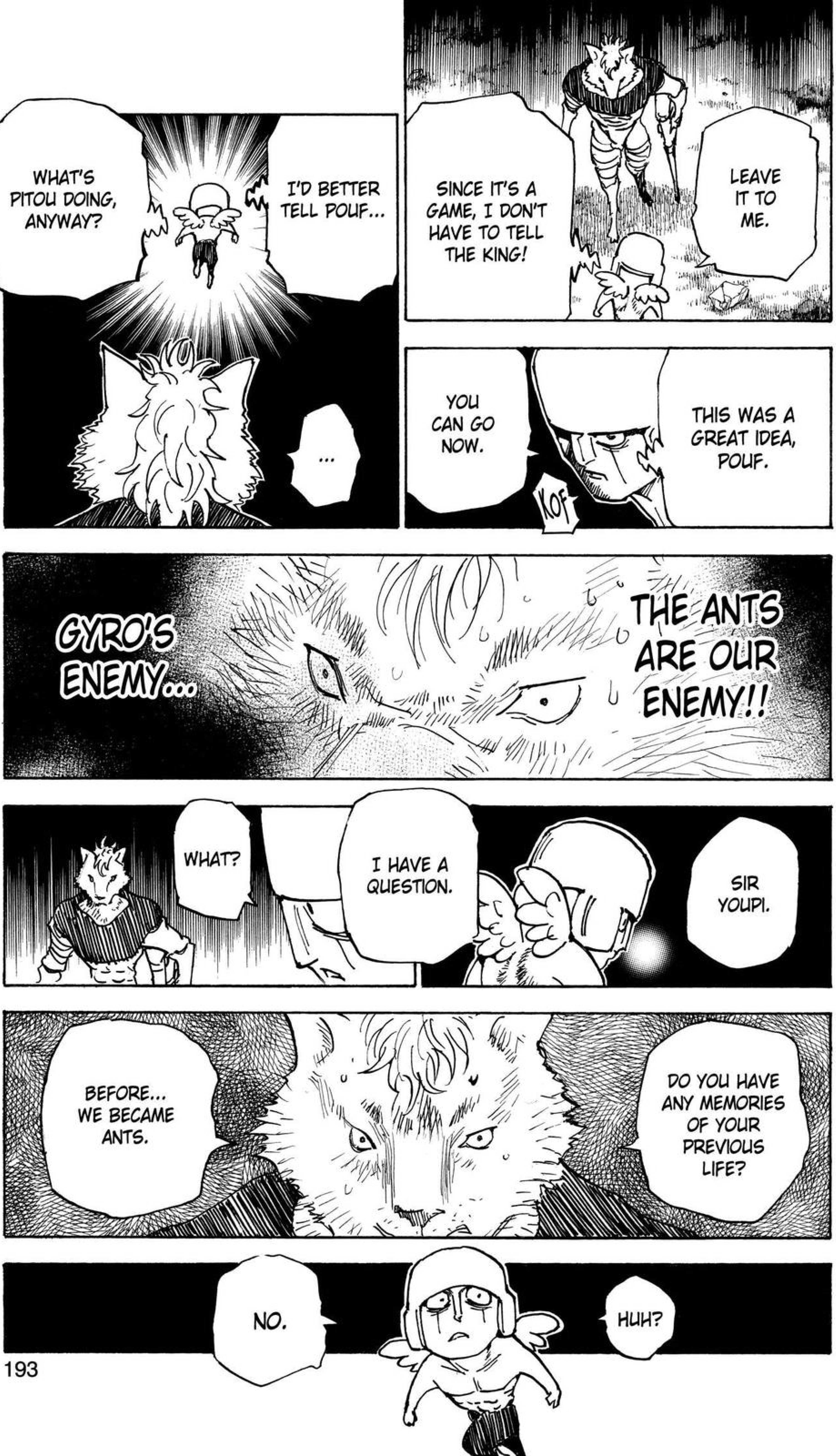

FSSSS
I'VE ALREADY GIVEN 6/7 OF MY BODY TO THE KING.
I CAN'T DISPERSE MY SCALES AS WELL AS I USED TO!! I'VE GROWN WEAKER!!
AND PITOU'S PUPPETS ARE GONE!
HE'S IN A BATTLE WHERE HE CAN'T EVEN SPARE...
...THE AURA TO MAINTAIN THE PUPPETS?
I CAN'T SPLIT INTO SEGMENTS WHILE I DISPERSE MY SCALES...
...BUT I HAVE TO GO KILL KOMUGI AS SOON AS POSSIBLE!!
THIS IS IT!!
THE LAST CHANCE I'LL GET!!

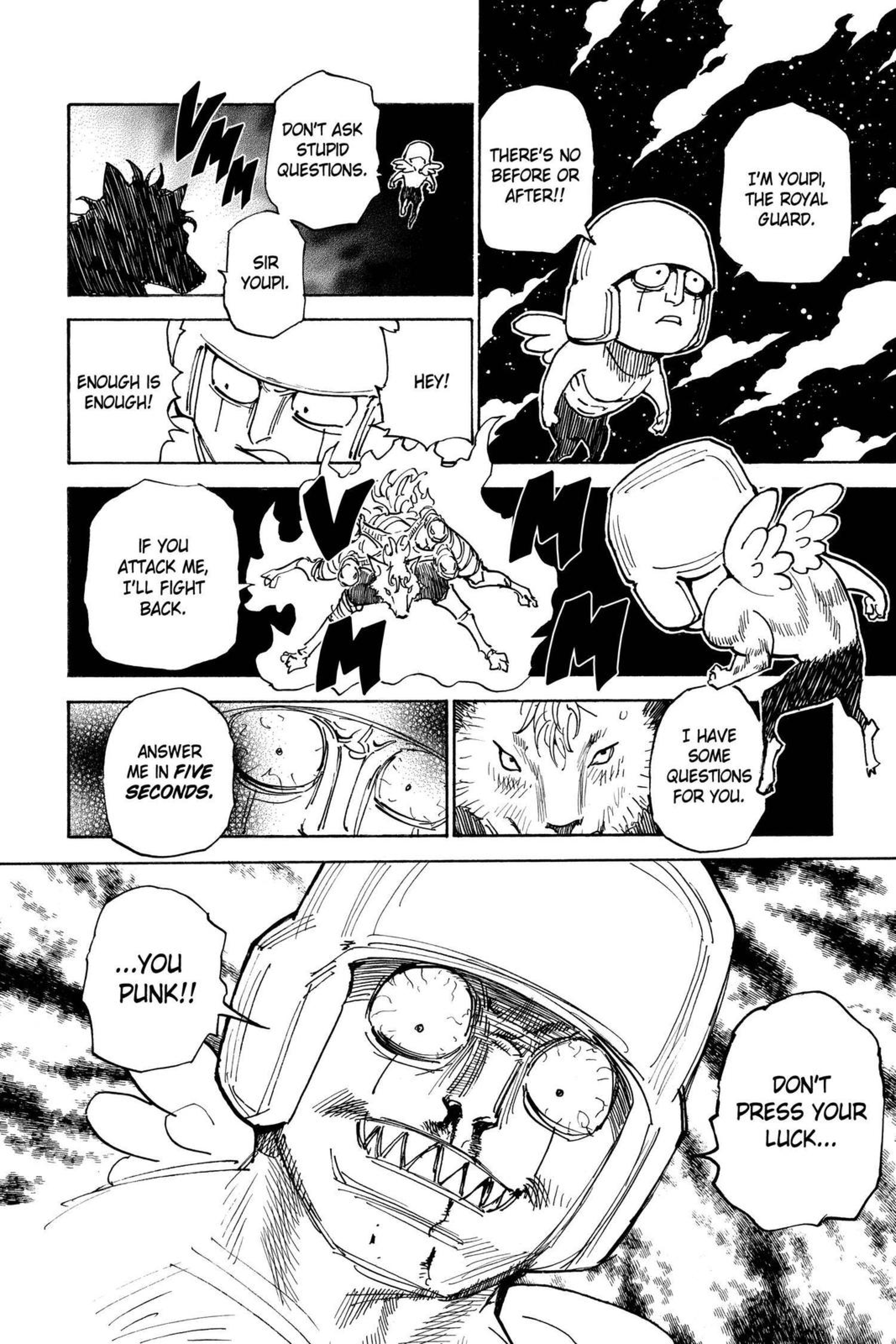

ARE YOU SURE ABOUT THIS, POUF?
IT'S BEEN TEN MINUTES, AND NO SIGN OF PITOU.
YOFF
SCREECH
GET OUT.
SLAM
UNTIE YOURSELVES AND ESCAPE IN THE TRUCKS.
ONCE YOU'RE OUTSIDE, YOU'LL SEE WHAT'S HAPPENED.

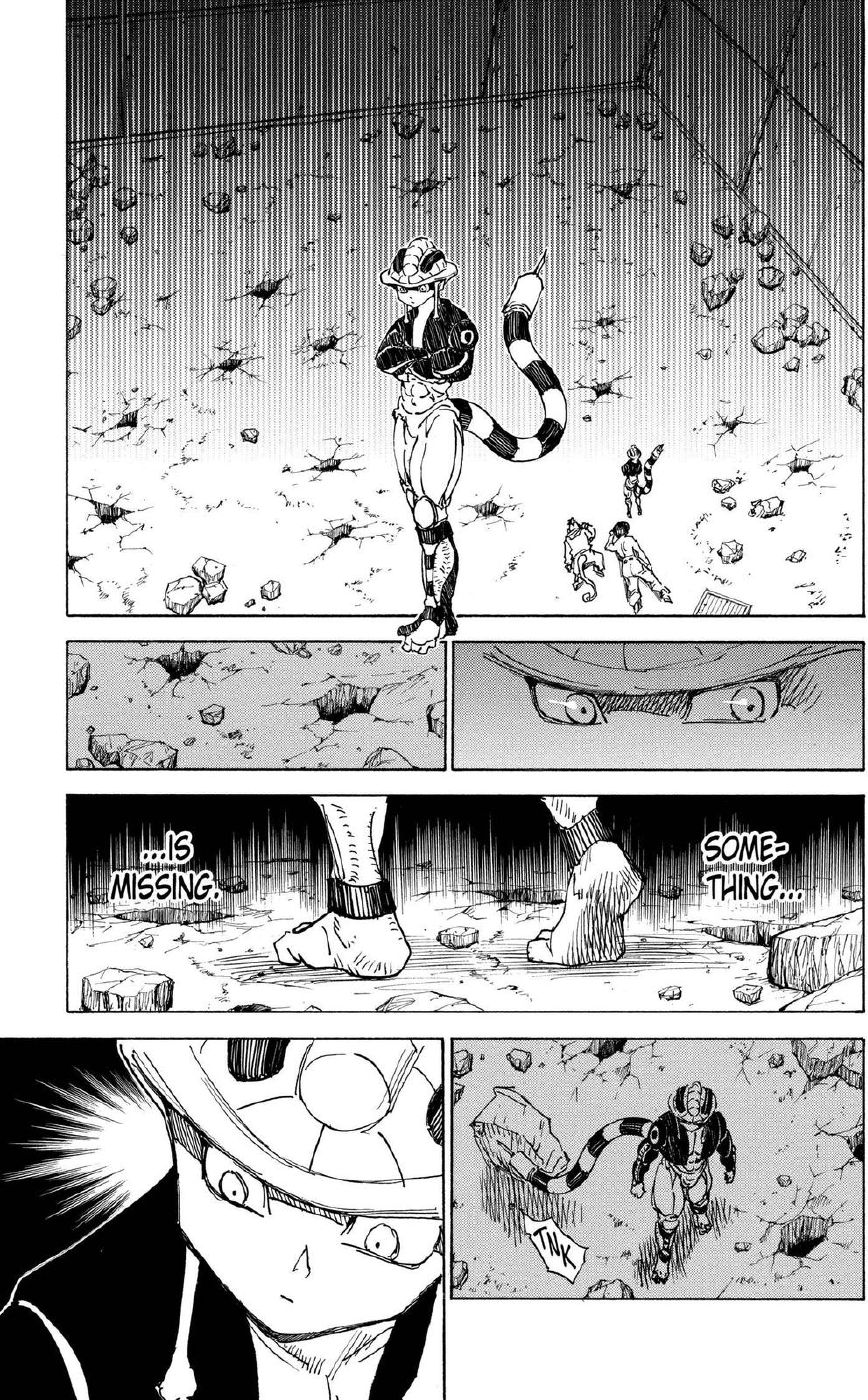

BLOSTER'S FORGOTTEN ABOUT OUR OLD LIFE TOGETHER.
HE WAS ONE OF US. TAKE HIM WITH YOU.
...
FEH
VROOOM
ROOOM
...
HOW DO YOU KNOW?
?
YOU TOLD ME TO GO SEE GYRO.
HOW DO YOU EVEN KNOW HE'S *ALIVE?*

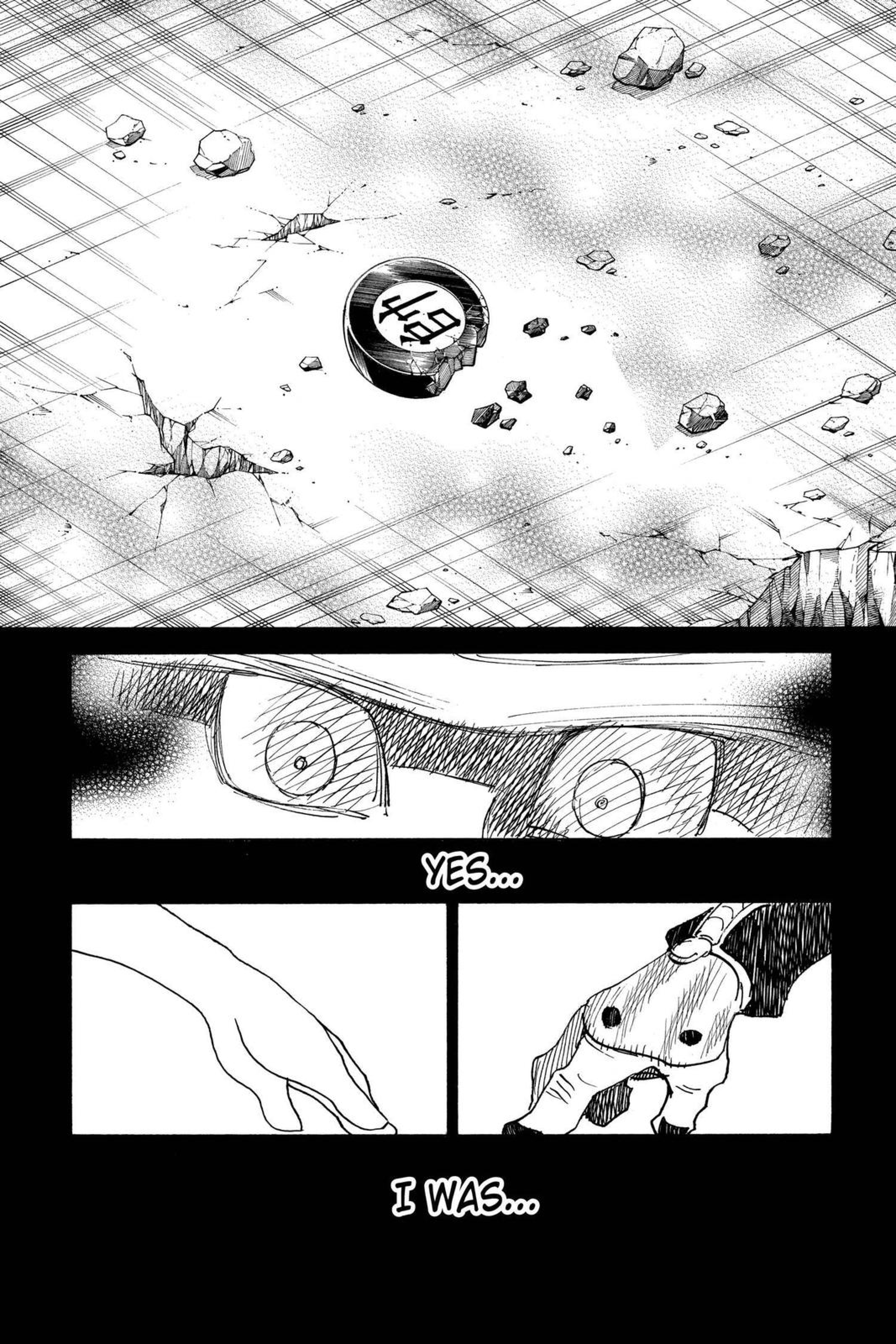

...
I DON'T.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
I DON'T REALLY KNOW.
BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE ANYTHING ELSE.
EVEN ***WE'RE*** STILL ALIVE, MORE OR LESS.
HE WASN'T THE TYPE TO JUST LET HIMSELF GET DIGESTED.
I HATE IT... BUT HE'S RIGHT.
GYRO WOULDN'T DIE FOR NOTHING!!
FINE...
BIP
BIP
THE ANTS ARE OUR ENEMY!!
TO THANK YOU FOR OPENING MY EYES...
...I'LL BE YOUR MESSENGER!!

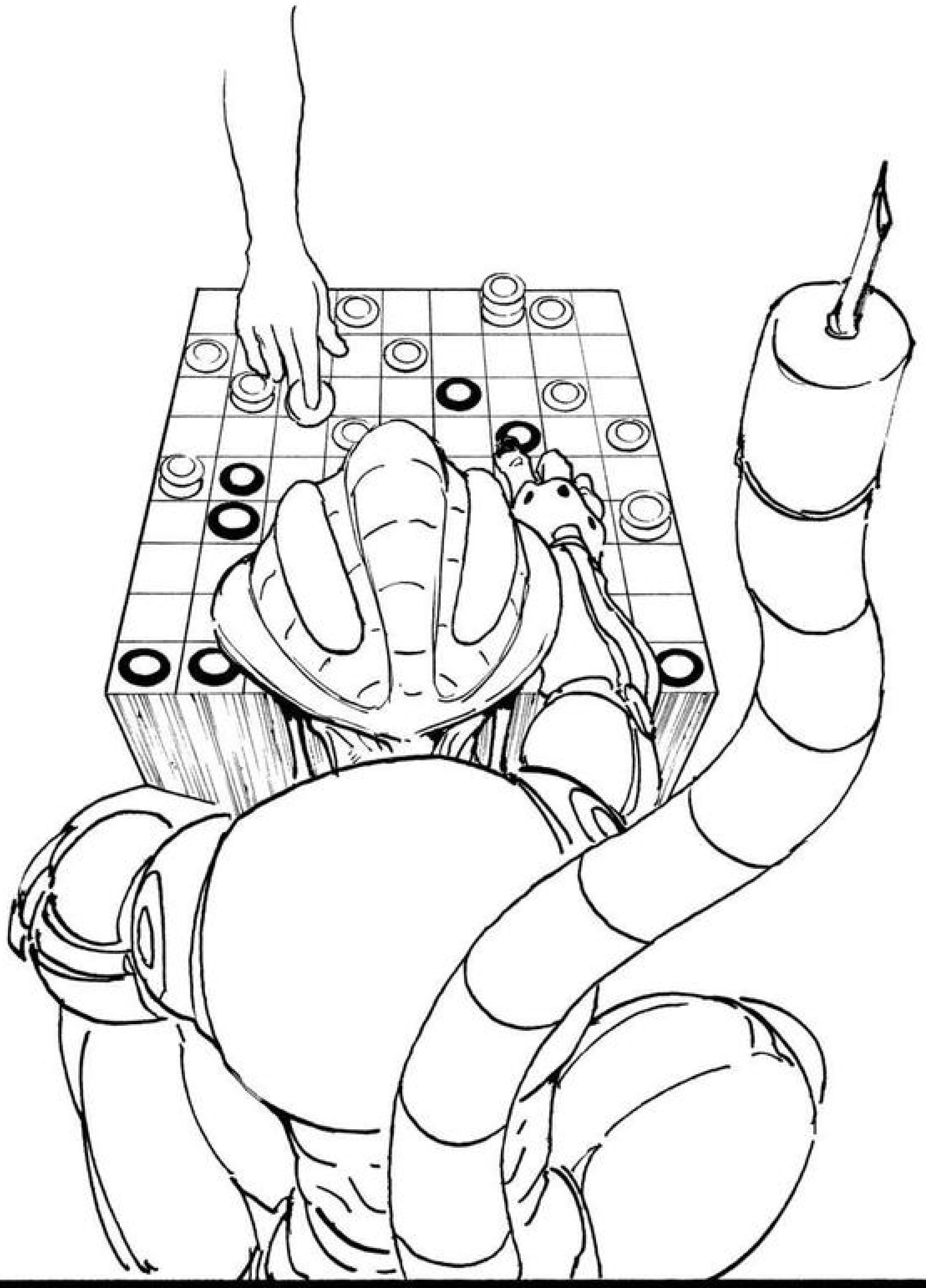

RRRRRMM
!
VROOOM
SHOOOOM
SIR YOUPI.
THERE'S SOMETHING I MUST TELL THE KING.
IN THE WARE-HOUSE?
YES.
SO THEY WANT TO TRADE THE GIRL FOR THEIR FRIENDS.
YES.
PLEASE TELL THE KING AT ONCE.


LEAVE IT TO ME.
SINCE IT'S A GAME, I DON'T HAVE TO TELL THE KING!
I'D BETTER TELL POUF...
WHAT'S PITOU DOING, ANYWAY?
THIS WAS A GREAT IDEA, POUF.
KOF
YOU CAN GO NOW.
...
THE ANTS ARE OUR ENEMY!!
GYRO'S ENEMY...
SIR YOUPI.
I HAVE A QUESTION.
WHAT?
DO YOU HAVE ANY MEMORIES OF YOUR PREVIOUS LIFE?
BEFORE... WE BECAME ANTS.
HUH?
NO.


I'M YOUPI, THE ROYAL GUARD.
THERE'S NO BEFORE OR AFTER!!
DON'T ASK STUPID QUESTIONS.
VMM
SIR YOUPI.
HEY!
ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!
MMM
IF YOU ATTACK ME, I'LL FIGHT BACK.
VMM
I HAVE SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU.
ANSWER ME IN *FIVE SECONDS.*
DON'T PRESS YOUR LUCK...
...YOU PUNK!!

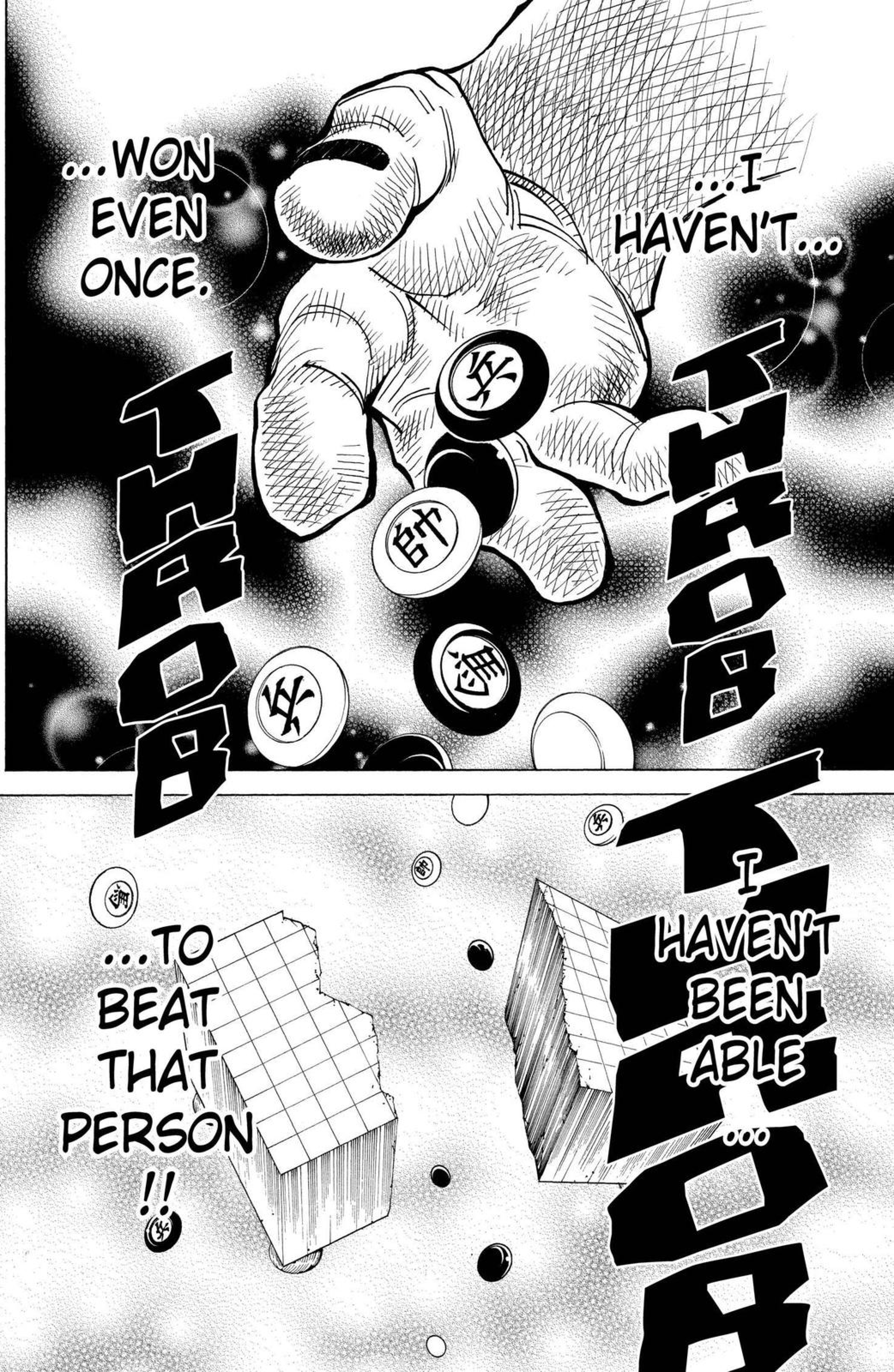

SOME-THING...
...IS MISSING.
TNK

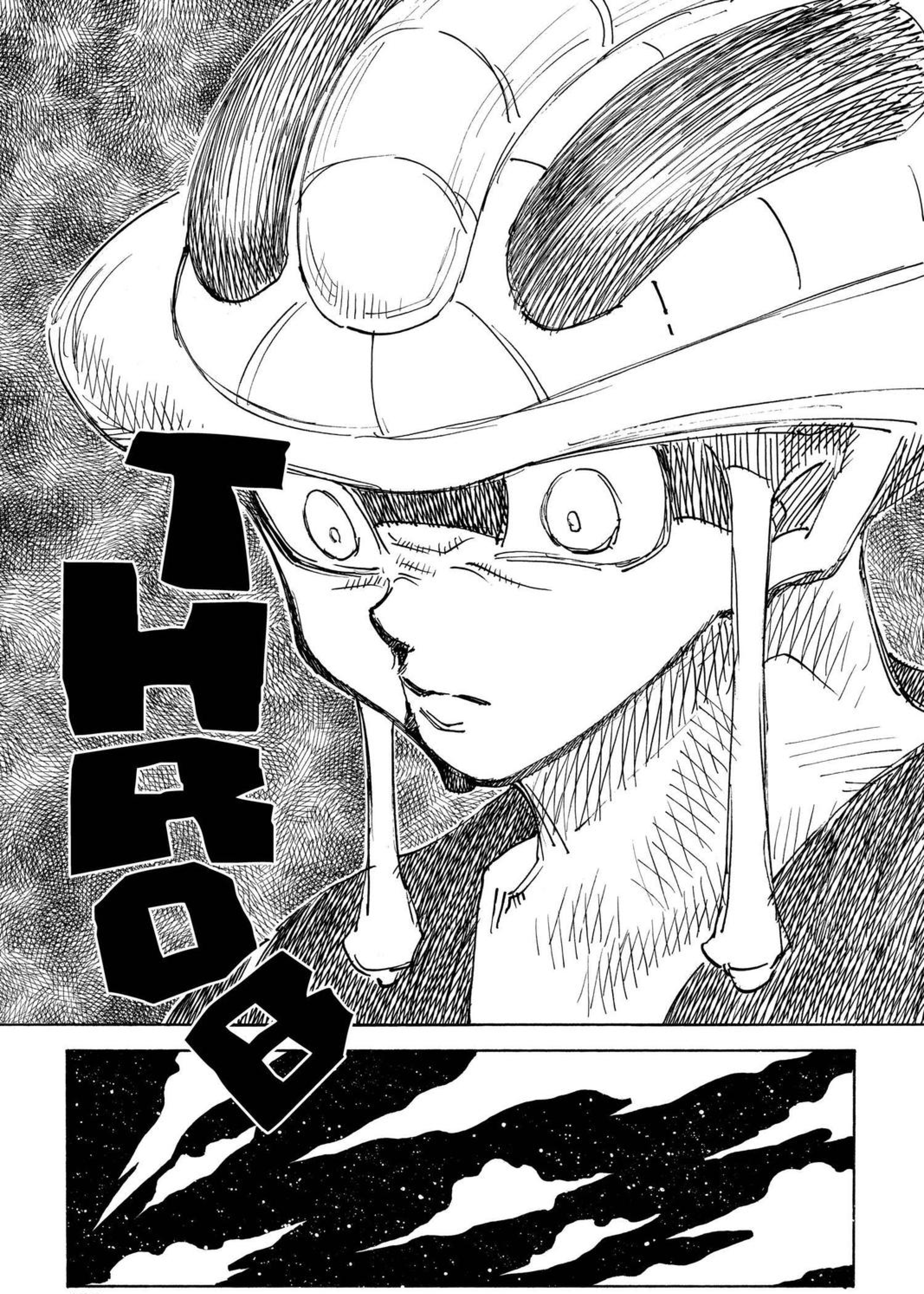

YES...
I WAS...

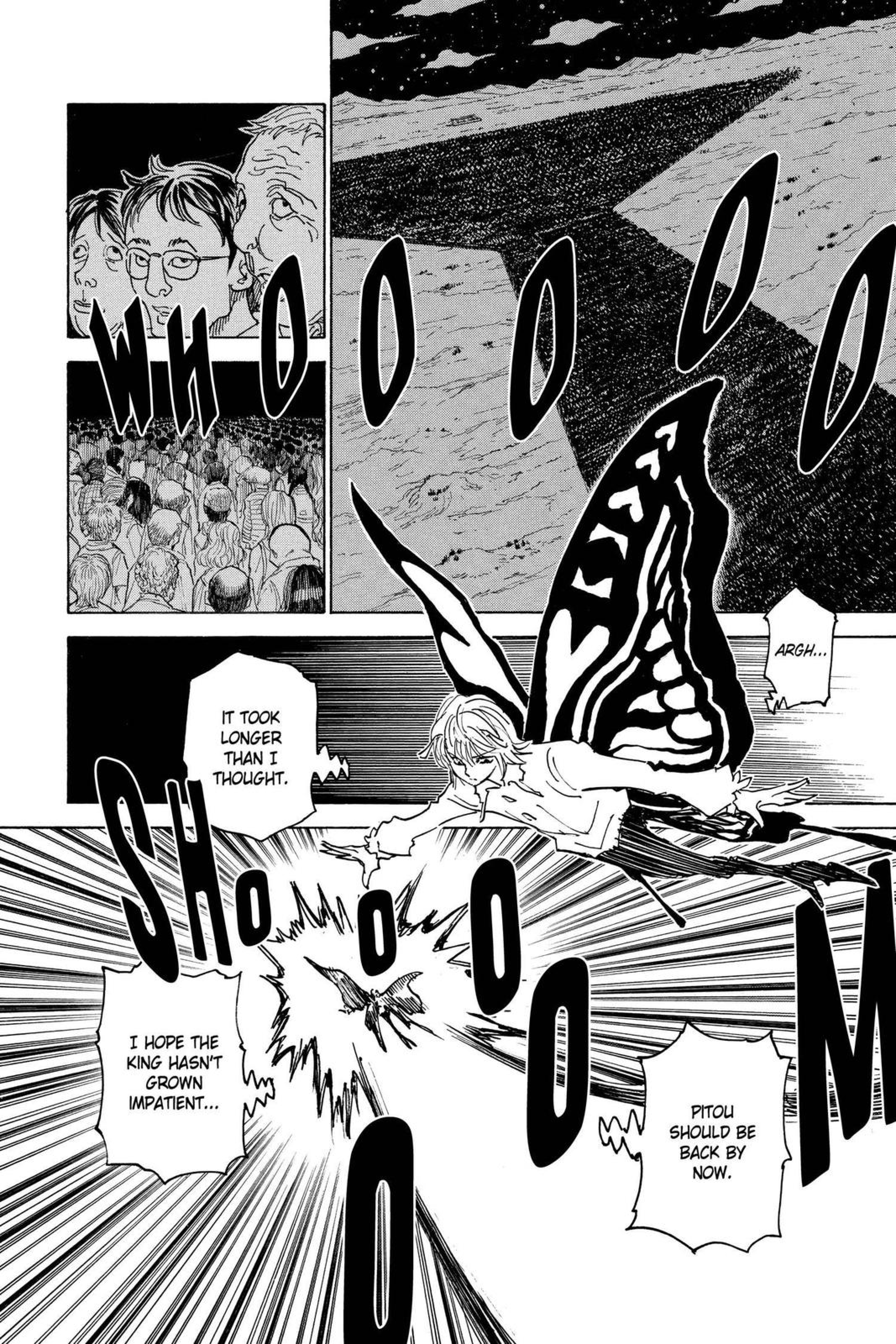


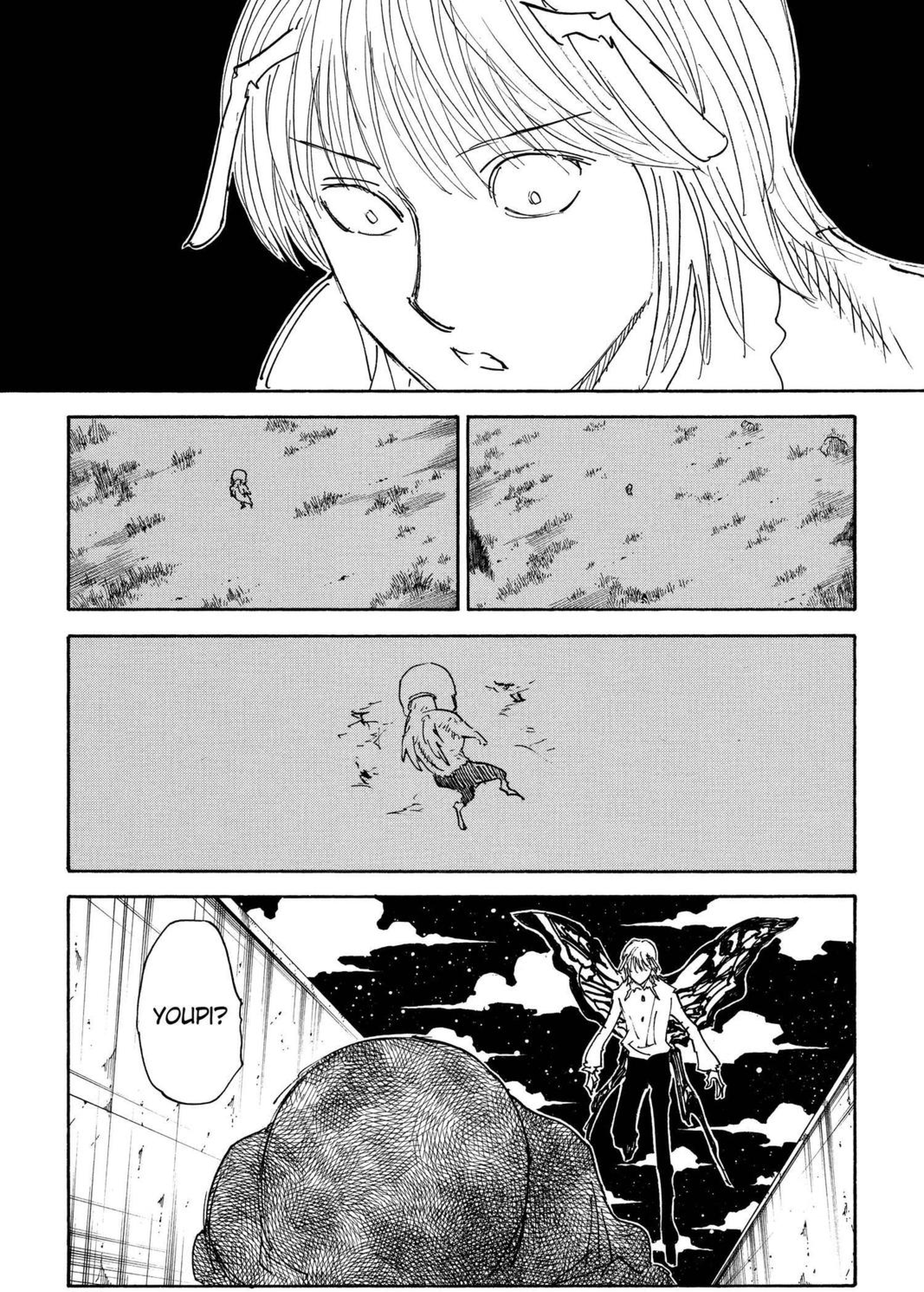
...PLAYING WITH SOMEONE!!

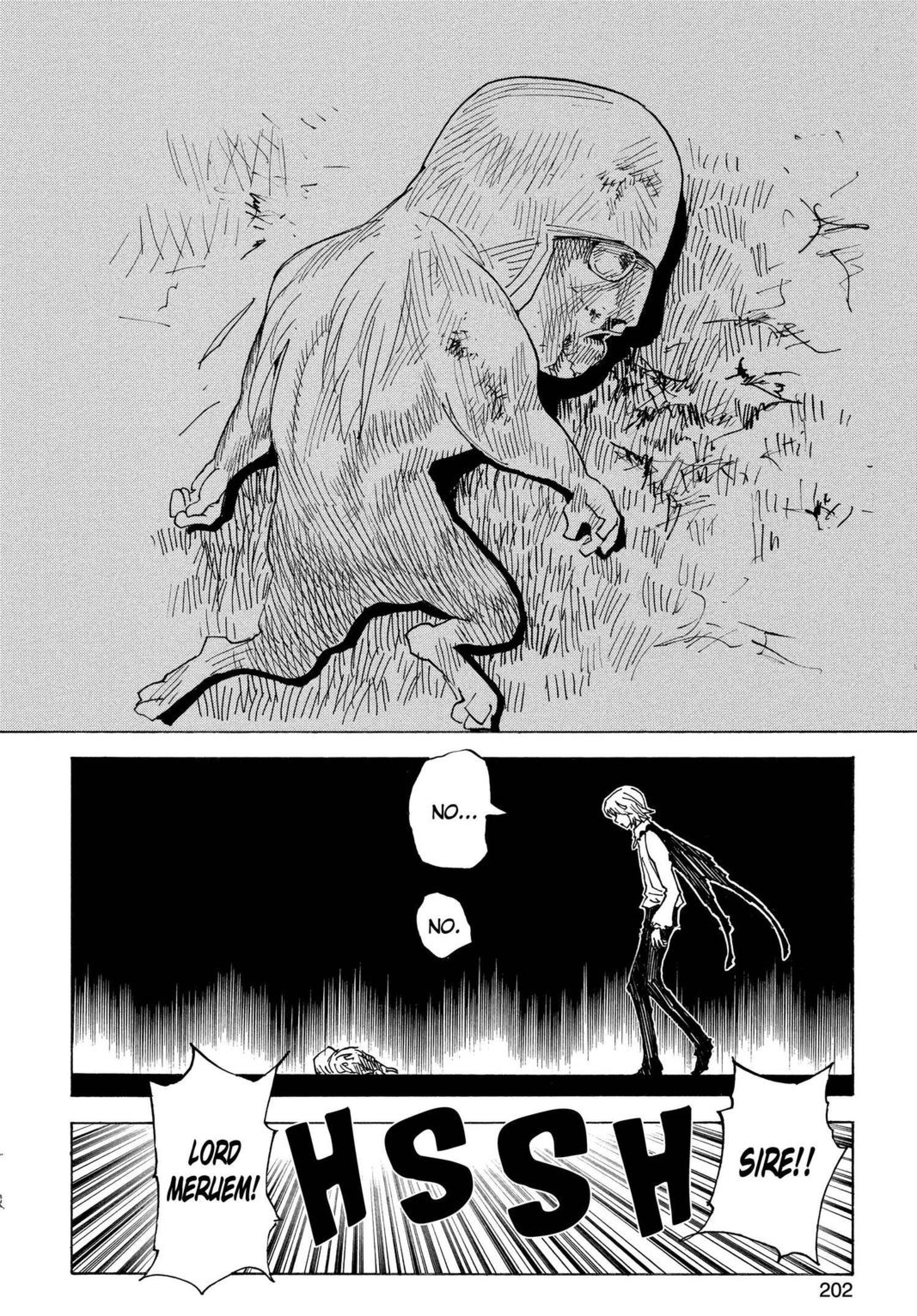
FURTHERMORE....

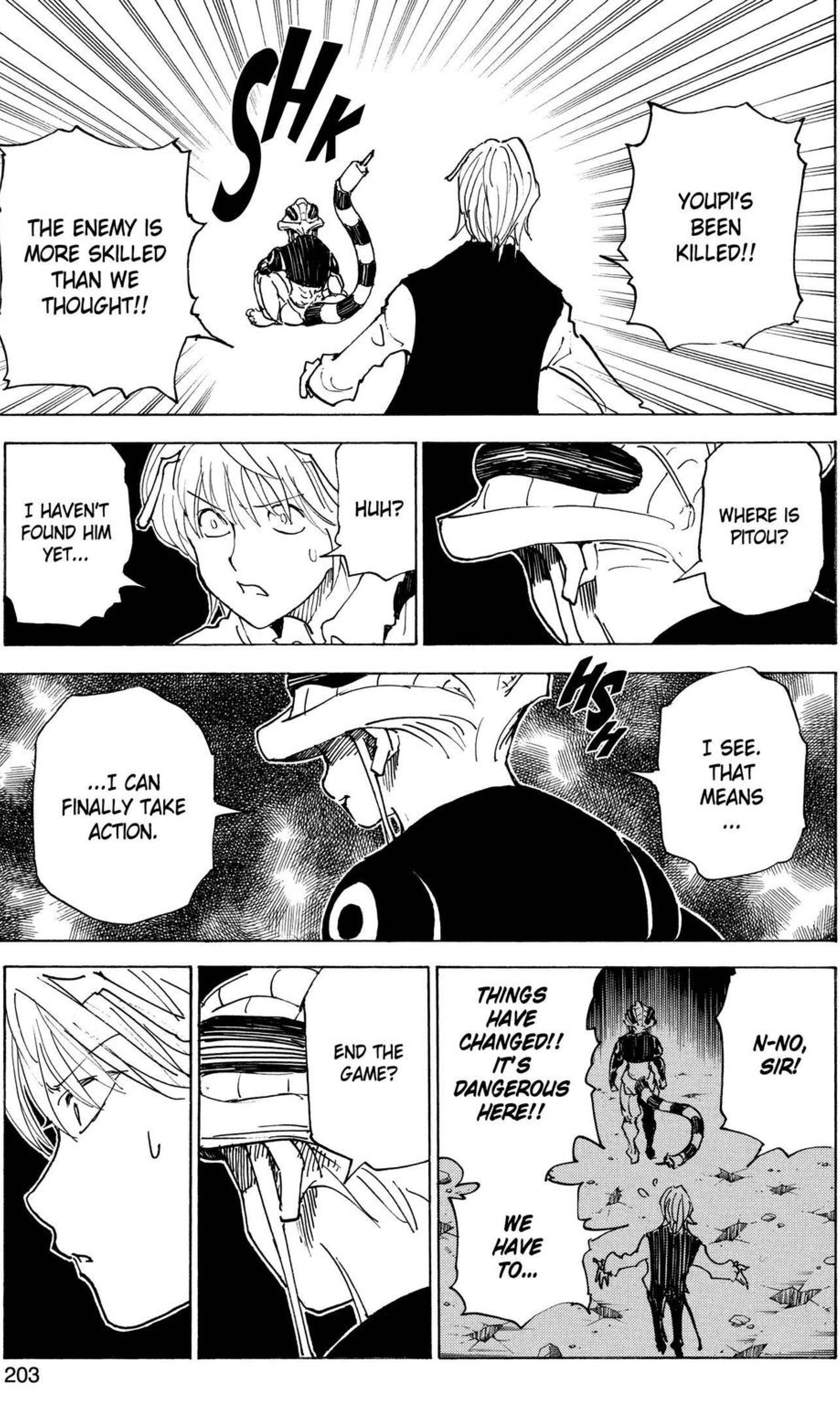

...I HAVEN'T...
...WON EVEN ONCE.
THROB
THROB
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE...
...TO BEAT THAT PERSON!!
THROB

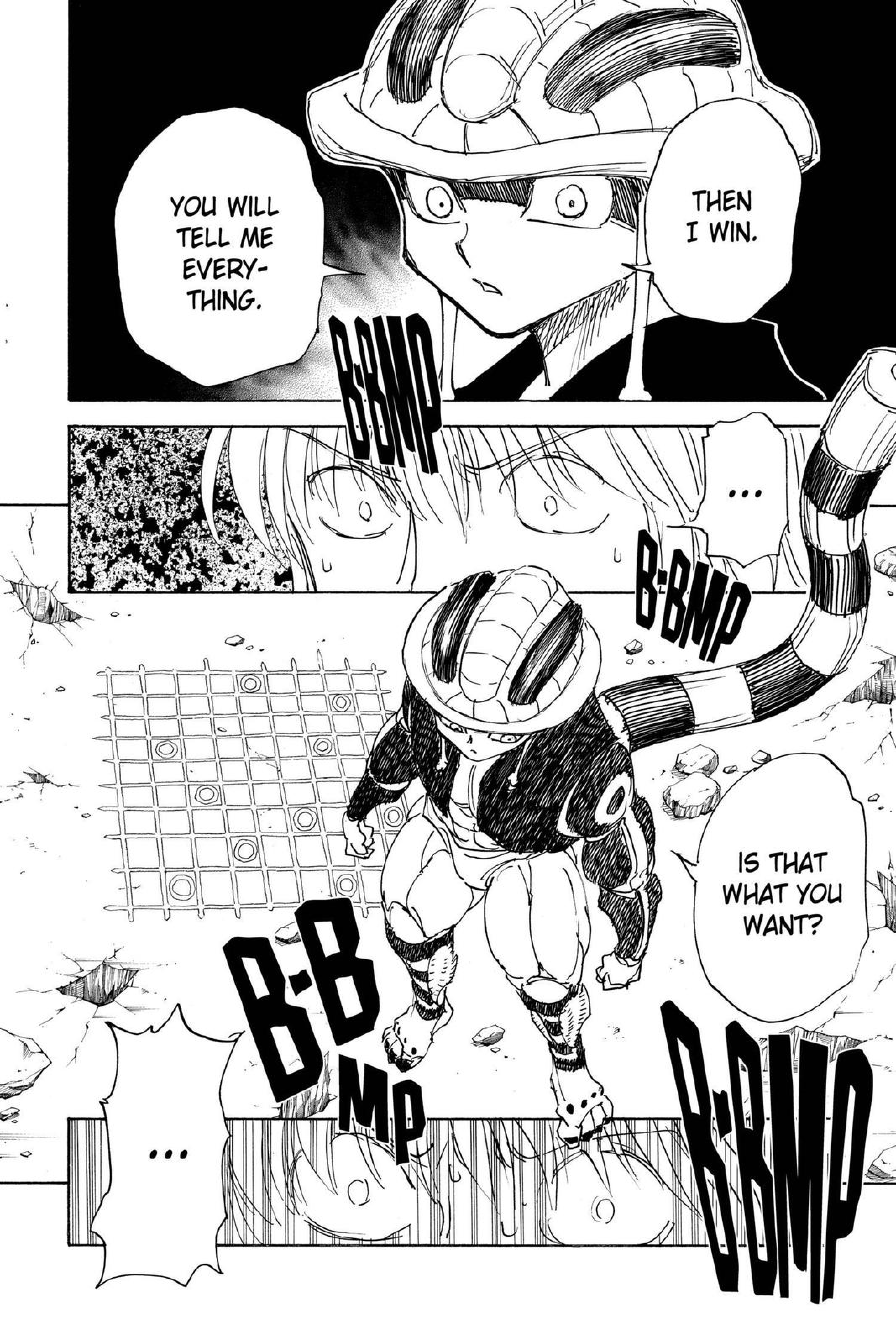

THROB

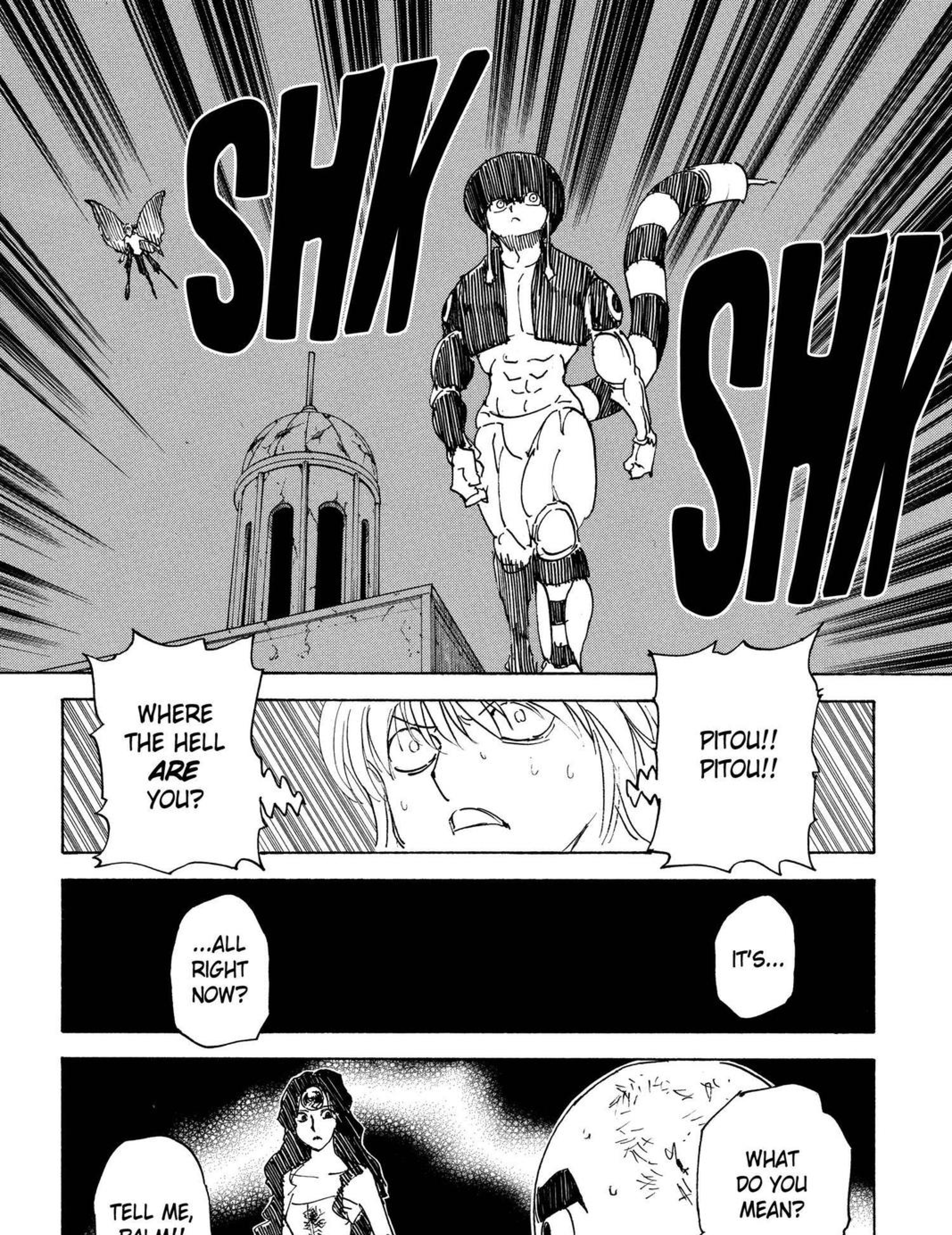

WHOOOOOOO
ARGH...
IT TOOK LONGER THAN I THOUGHT.
PITOU SHOULD BE BACK BY NOW.
I HOPE THE KING HASN'T GROWN IMPATIENT...
SHOOOOOOM


YOUPI?


NO...
NO.
SIRE!!
HSSH
LORD MERUEM!


YOUPI'S BEEN KILLED!!
SHK
THE ENEMY IS MORE SKILLED THAN WE THOUGHT!!
WHERE IS PITOU?
HUH?
I HAVEN'T FOUND HIM YET...
HSH
I SEE. THAT MEANS ...
...I CAN FINALLY TAKE ACTION.
N-NO, SIR!
THINGS HAVE CHANGED!! IT'S DANGEROUS HERE!!
WE HAVE TO...
END THE GAME?


THEN I WIN.
YOU WILL TELL ME EVERYTHING.
B-BMP
...
B-BMP
IS THAT WHAT YOU WANT?
B-BMP
B-BMP
...


SHK
SHK
PITOU!! PITOU!!
WHERE THE HELL ARE YOU?
IT'S...
...ALL RIGHT NOW?
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
TELL ME, PALM!!

VOL. 29: MEMORY: END.